SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW

NOVEMBER 1983

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INTERVIEW: *DARRELL SCHWEITZER*
PROFILE: ***PIERS ANTHONY***

☆NOTES FROM BALTIMORE BY CHARLES PLATT☆

NOISE LEVEL **BY JOHN BRUNNER**

RICHARD E. GEIS - GENE DEWEESE - ORSON SCOTT CARD - ELTON T. ELLIOTT - ALEXIS GILLILAND

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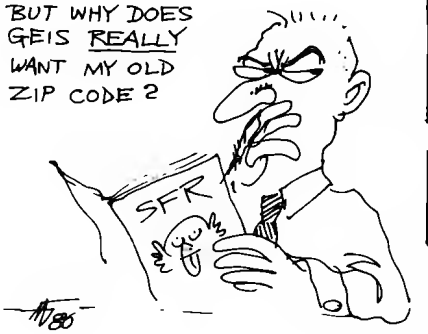
KURT VONNEGUT
DARRELL SCHWEITZER

"HARD SCIENCE FICTION IN THE REAL WORLD"
BY GREG BENFORD

THE COLUMNISTS, RICHARD GEIS, THE CARTOONISTS



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ALIEN THOUGHTS

RICHARD E. GEIS

THE PHONE RANG. I ANSWERED IT. BARRY MALZBERG SAID....

"Congratulations, Dick. I accepted a Hugo Award for you a few minutes ago..."

It was for Best Fan Writer, and the news filled my heart with joy and my mind full of amazement. I hadn't thought I'd win.

Actually, you don't win a Hugo. It's an award that is given to you. And the nominating and voting isn't in your control.

So I thank all those who nominated me for Best Fan Writer, and those who voted for me.

It's a proud and humble thing to be a fan.

And thank you, Barry for accepting for me.

AN AWARD I CAN WEAR

arrived 9-17-83 in the pocket of Richard Haas (I think that's the spelling) who lives in or about Tigard, Oregon and who was in New York recently. He accepted the SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE 1983 READER AWARD for Best Fan Writer for me and returned with it to Oregon.

The award is in the form of a handsome medal or medallion. When next I make an appearance at a local convention I may wear it (and the 1982 Best Fan Writer Award which I was given last year).

Thank you to all those readers of the SF CHRONICLE who voted for me.

[I should add that the medallion is in a plastic case on a bed of blue foam.]

Nice, nice, very nice.

HUGO AWARDS RESULTS:

The winners were:

BEST NOVEL
Foundation's Edge, Isaac Asimov, Doubleday

BEST NOVELLA
"Souls," Joanna Russ, The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction, 1/82

BEST NOVELETTE
"Fire Watch," Connie Willis, Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine, 2/15/82

BEST SHORT STORY
"Melancholy Elephants," Spider Robinson, Analog, 6/82

BEST NON-FICTION BOOK
Isaac Asimov: The Foundations of Science Fiction, James Gunn, Oxford

BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST
Michael Whelan

BEST PROFESSIONAL EDITOR
Ed Ferman

BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION
Bladerunner

BEST FANZINE
Locus

BEST FAN ARTIST
Alexis Gilliland

BEST FAN WRITER
Richard E. Geis

JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD FOR BEST NEW WRITER
Paul O. Williams

CONVENTIONAL WI$DOM

L.A. con II has announced its membership prices and I am incredulous.

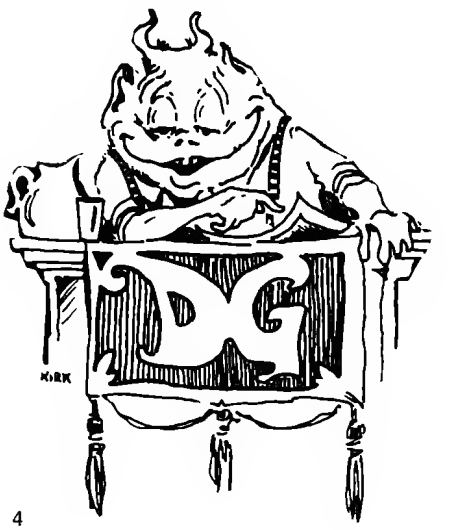
'Membership in L.A.con II is $40 until December 1983, at which time the fee will rise to $50. The $50 rate will be available until 15 July 1984. The rate at the door will be $75.'

---Craig Miller, Co-Chairman
22 August 1983.

I'll pass, thank you. I stopped buying non-attending memberships in worldcons back when they were $8. or so. I, and many, many other fans who might like to join only to vote in the Hugo balloting, have been priced out of the system. Membership and attending a worldcon have become big affairs, obviously, and the sheep are still standing still for the shearing.

And the Hugo awards are now an award given by those who are middle-class, employed, and/or the wealthy.

I'm not complaining too much, mind; the worldcons are taking on significant respectibility and media importance, and have become multi-leveled, multi-faceted affairs requiring a large, dedicated, disciplined staff. They deserve some compensation. And the overhead is enormous. So I can see that the price increases are probably justified. I just can't afford them.



And I worry that a lot of others cannot afford them, too, who would like to attend or vote.

How, I wonder, too, will the Hugo voting be warped by the exclusion, more and more, of lower-income fans?

CHINESE REJECTION

The Chinese have solved the delicate problem of rejection. While still following the dictates of their scrupulously polite society. Their missal, I am assured, runs thus:

'Most esteemed sir,

It is with the utmost regret that I return your most treasured and perfect manuscript in which every word is a gem, each sentence like a crown in literature's hallowed pages.

The standard of excellence is so high that our poor and humble house, plagued as it is with the works of lesser mortals paling in your light, cannot possibly publish your work. We would be setting new standards of brilliance against which it would be impossible to publish any other work, thereby forcing our long-established but modest business to cease, throwing men out of work, driving women from their homes and making children starve for lack of bread. So as a responsibility to our great and glorious ancestors this too magnificent work, of which we are not worthy, is enclosed.'

---BOOKS AND BOOKMEN, a British Literary magazine
(Thanks to Ted Butt)

I wonder what their acceptance letter is like?

THE SHAPE OF PUBLISHING TO COME

Richard Curtis, in the "My Say" column in the August 12, 1983 issue of PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, points out a disturbing trend in publishing---the abdication of editorial control by publishing houses to book packagers in order to save money.

And, he points out, there is another thundercloud on the horizon: persistent reports that some publishers have shown manuscripts to the buyers of major bookstore chains in order to assure huge orders and a virtual guaranteed profit on a given book. Thus the bookbuyers make the editorial decision--buy, don't buy---and (depending on the sizes of their orders) how much to advance the author, what kind of contract to offer?

The bookbuyer orders on the basis of what he or she knows sells best. The quality of the writing is irrelevant; what matters are the story elements, the types of characters, the background....in fiction.

The influence of the gothics and lately the sweet and/or sexy romances that sell so well has convinced about everyone that the readers don't care about quality writing---only what is written about.

Novels, of all types, are being and increasingly will be put together like a meal----so much of this ingedient, so much of that...a pinch of something else.... Yes, yes, carpentry and formula.

And if it is that simple, where is it Written that only name publishers can contract with authors for manuscripts, put together a line, ship to bookstores?

WHY CAN'T A CHAIN OF BOOKSTORES CUT OUT THE PUBLISHERS COMPLETELY? As Curtis points out, Walden Bookstores is publishing classics now. How soon before Walden hires a little more staff and publishes originals? They'd be following the example of many other corporations who control the product they sell from manufacturing to selling at retail. The profits (and bookkeeping advantages) are enormously expanded.

The only risk involved is anti-trust action by the U.S. government, which moved against movie producers who owned chains of theaters, and newspapers who owned TV and radio stations in their areas. Monopoly...control of distribution...control of what people can read.... It's a spectre that will be raised if, now that publishers have mostly given up owning bookstores, bookstore chains start publishing to provide themselves with less expensive product.

I expect to see agents become packagers, and agents making deals with bookstore chains. The product involved will likely be category fiction---genre junk---which involves less risk and less expense.

The genre author of the future will write on a specific word processor compatible with printers computer-run typesetting/printing setups, and will be in constant telephone conferencing with the editors/packagers/agents involved. The reliable, competent writer who has some talent will be king.

Why do people read pulp fiction when there's so much visual pulp available on TV, at the movies?

As Isaac Asimov once wrote in response to those who predicted the end of reading: books are cheap, portable, instantly accessible. You cannot watch part of a show on TV on the bus, on a bench during lunch, then watch another part

in the bathroom, another part while stuck in traffic... Not yet. We are still slaves to TV schedules and bulky viewers. And the human mind's eye is still superior in most ways in creating pictures.

Vast changes are coming to publishing in the next 10 years. It'll be interesting to watch the warp and woof, the innovations, the collapse of empires, the creation of new ones.

THE CULTURAL ERA IS WORKING!

The report---we get so many in the news, some true, some scientific speculation, some outright lies---that men live as long as women if smoking and violence is deducted from the lifestyle.

This research report makes the point that there is biological equality between the sexes as far as longevity is concerned---if a male can keep out of trouble and not smoke.

And it seems that with women aping men by smoking more and more, and drinking, and perhaps engaging in more and more violence (of their own making), woman may, in a generation or two, achieve death superiority over men.

In previous centuries women usually wore out and died sooner than men because of the harsh physical workload and the hazards of childbirth.

For both males and females the only way to beat the actuarial table system (upon which pensions are based) is to live a low-stress, tranquil life among loved ones, stay lean, eat a balanced diet, do not smoke, avoid wars, laugh a lot.

I'll drink to that!

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

As the novels and partial novels pass through my mind and fingertips onto paper, in the past year especially, I'm more and more aware of the carpentry involved.

The requirements of the opening page, the required information which must be embedded in the scene, the tensions which must be added...

But it's information I'm aware of most. A novel is in a sense a collection of bits of information. I'm feeding this bit to the reader here for this purpose...and that bit over there for another purpose.

And all the while there's an editor in the mind saying, "You used the word 'again' twice there, too soon. Another word? Rephrase. Keep this dialog exchange short. He has to be jealous, but engagingly so. How do I describe his beard? How do I bring in the fact that she's a health nut--kind of? How much emphasis on the size of her breasts? Do most women readers wish they had big ones? At gut level?--because they attract men's gazes? Does instinct dominate in this case? How much emotion in Barbara when she thinks of her mother's terminal cancer?"

A shading of meaning here, a flare of emotion there...balancing, trying for an effect...

Well, maybe writing fiction is a combination of making soup, painting a picture, and building a house.

It's very complicated, and it's no wonder mistakes are made---sometimes huge howlers---and require dumping the soup, scraping off the canvas and dismantling the house.

Up until now in my fiction writing---all those sex novels!---editors took a ms or didn't. I can't remember anyone ever asking for rewrites or extra chapters.

Now, with THE SWORD OF ALLAH, Michaela Hamilton of Fawcett Gold Medal is going to send soon a list of changes she'd like---carpentry---to bring in the hero again sooner, bring back an appealing character who because of space limitations had to be ignored, cut some of my precious power-broker conspiracy dialogue in an early chapter (sob).

But she sees the novel in a different way than I, and from a perspective of thousands of manuscripts read, hundreds of novels published, perhaps dozens of best-sellers. Here is a wealth of knowledge and skills I want to learn from.

At bedrock I'm not a literary writer. I'm a commercial writer who wants to use my skills and talents to put together novels which a lot of people will read and enjoy, and who in the process will absorb or experience my view of reality, my "message". A line of dialogue here, an observation there...a shocking detail at the precisely right time... It doesn't require long philosophical passages to impart your deepest, most important beliefs. A bored reader is a lost reader.

And consider: the most influential TV show of the past decade, which has mixed grim reality with hilarious humor, which has inserted firm anti-war emotions and viewpoints into a generation of Americans (and other nationalities), and which has put a governor of sorts on American foreign policy in a real, but subtle way---is M.A.S.H.

Pop entertainment, sitcoms, bestseller novels...can do it all.

9-30-83 Word from Michaela Hamilton re the publishing date of THE SWORD OF ALLAH. It is scheduled for August, 1984.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GEIS....

is a mess, and getting messier. Let us turn over a rock or two, and peer into a garbage can, a pool of vomit, a safe deposit box...

9-6-83 The Russians, probably mistakenly, cut their throat by shooting down that Korean airliner. And, somewhat gloatingly, the Reagan administration is beating them over the head with the act. The Liberals and Socialists and Communists of the world are stunned and in disarray, quiet as mice. Now, with proof positive that the Russians are callous, brutal, paranoid monsters who care naught for human life, Reagan will have his way in trying to overthrow the Sandinistas in Nigaragua, and in putting in place all those new missiles in Europe.

Man, I'll bet heads are rolling in Siberia.

9-12-83 I'm getting a real bad set of vibes from the economic news lately. Armed food riots occurring in Brazil---72 so far... Steel production trending down... Lumber production going down... The stock market yo-yoing up and down in extremely volatile trading: up 20, down 11, up to zero, down 12 at the close...on 114 million shares traded. Wow.

This economy may be turning sour far sooner than even I expected.

Everyone thinks the Federal Reserve will never allow the economy to collapse--or boom excessively---until after the next presidential election in November, 1984. But I've never subscribed to the notion that the Fed is all-powerful, especially where the rest of the world is concerned. And the debt crisis is coming to a head now, getting riper and riper. International lending and international trade continues to shrink. Smaller banks are becoming more and more reluctant to send millions overseas by joining, or continuing to participate in, huge multi-million and billion dollar syndicated loans. This leaves the huge NY banks even more exposed.

And Saudi Arabia and other OPEC nations are beginning to sell assets in this country, to pay their bills. There are small signs of an erosion in the spot prices for oil as the summer driving/vacation season ends.

If the Iran/Iraq war ends--look for a collapse in oil prices; both nations will pump oil like crazy to pay accumulated debts and rebuild their countries. Iran will undersell Saudi Arabia and Kuwait as a matter of revenge for the support given Iraq. The financial repercussions would be disaster for Mexico and Venezuela---and tumble them into bankruptcy. And then... You can trace the cause and effect chain into this country easily, I hope.

The world needs to have that Iran/Iraq war to continue! But Iraq is running out of money and time as the Saudi's and Kuwait have had to cut back on their subsidies to help Iraq.

1984 may be a very interesting year.

9-18-83 Time after time, in international crisis events (and national, as well) information comes to light days after the primary event which makes one think twice.

We have learned since the Russians shot down Korean Airlines flight 007 that the U.S. flies parallel spy missions along that route, that it uses large, four-engine jets of similar size and shape to a 747, and that the last words broadcast by the pilot of the downed jet were apparently code words: "One Zero One Zero Delta."

And the Russians claim the pilot was an officer in the Korean Air Force. That has not been denied to my knowledge.

And there is a desperate hunt by the Russians and the U.S. for the "black box" recorder which contains a record of all transmissions in the cockpit of the downed 747, as well as flight data.

Then there's the incomplete tape of the Russian pilot's transmissions to his base during the stalking and shooting of the 747, played by the U.S. to the United Nations ..

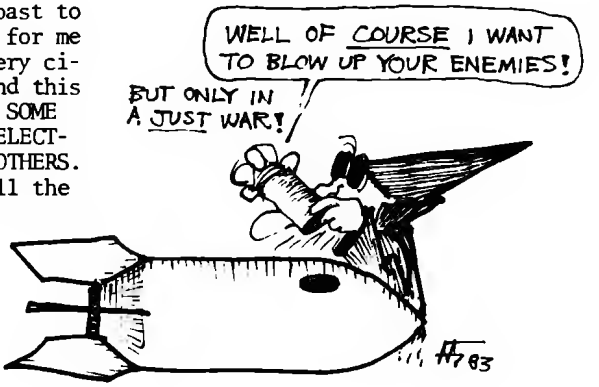
My current view is that there's more to this than we know, and as things stand I think the Russians genuinely did think they had a spy plane in their airspace, but goofed in not making a closer look at the plane.

They've suffered a terrific propaganda defeat from shooting down the jetliner and have made it worse by stupid reaction to the event. They've shown incompetence, rigidity, clumsiness, arrogance, contempt for human life...

BUT---

Damn it, the U.S. government has lied too often in the recent past to its citizens and to the world for me to wholly believe it now. Every citizen should always keep in mind this dictum: ALL GOVERNMENTS LIE; SOME MORE THAN OTHERS, SOME MORE SELECTIVELY AND MORE CLEVERLY THAN OTHERS.

Sometimes the Russians tell the truth.



SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO

THE INTEGRAL TREES By Larry Niven

At Larry's request, Robert P. Mills, his agent, sent me a ms. copy of Larry's new novel, just completed. I have no information yet as to which publisher will take it.

But I can tell you a lot about the story and about the weird, wild, possible solar system/life system that he has developed. If you thought the Ringworld was strange...

If I remember correctly, he has posited a sun in close orbit around a neutron star. A bit unusual, but okay. In turn, orbiting very, very (relatively) close to that n-star, far inside the sun's orbit, is the remnants of a gas giant planet.

These remnants have the shape of a smoke ring existing in a more rarified gas torus. Here's the kicker: the smoke ring is made up of air, huge floating globules of water the size of lakes, and strange, giant trees.

These Integral Trees are hundreds of kilometers long and float in the smoke ring like monster spokes in a wheel. They have an ecology---"tufts" at each end which function to divert water and debris into the tree mouth to feed and provide its moisture. Water is collected by means of leaves and branches and gravity spins the water down the trunk to the tufts. Each three has a no-gravity midpoint. Each tree has parasitic and complementary plant and animal life.

And on Dalton-Quinn Tree, live a tribe of humans, part of the mutineers who abandoned the Earth seeder ramship 500 years before to survive in The Smoke Ring. The ship is named Discipline and is controlled by a sentient computer matrixed from the mind and character of Sharls Davis Kendy. Discipline wants to get on with its mission but cannot for lack of its human crew, and is unable to penetrate The Smoke Ring.

Thus it waits and monitors and becomes ever more angry and anxious.

Meanwhile, Quinn tribe's "in" end of their tree is dying slowly for lack of water. They are unaware of another tribe--the Dalton tribe---who inhabit the other, "out" length of the miles-long tree.

They don't know of other humans on other trees.

Their leader sends an exploring party of misfits and unwanteds up the tree trunk to search for food and water... They encounter a similar party from the Dalton tribe, a war begins...the tree dies violently, splitting apart...

The action and the wonders are constant, yet the tribe members are utterly human and distinctive. The adventures are strange and marvelous and entirely, scientifically true.

Oh---there are also strange, deadly beasts flying and drifting around in The Smoke Ring. And there is a woman-dominated tribe who inhabit a free-floating jungle who often prey upon and war upon the Dalton tribe. The Daltons have retained a lot of scientific knowledge and equipment from their leaving the Discipline.

And there's more and more...I can't remember it all. This is a rich, detailed, well-written hard science fiction adventure...and believe me, it's obvious there are more novels to come as Larry mines this strange, complicated solar and life system for its many stories.

There is a treat coming to you in 1984: THE INTEGRAL TREES.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GEIS, CONT.

The delivery of some top-of-the-line French Etendard bombers to Iraq and a supply of the the French Exocet missiles which can be carried by the Etendards, suggests a crisis in the on-going Iran-Iraq war. The Exocet missiles were almost a decisive factor in the UK-Argentine war over the Falklands, remember, as they sank a couple British warships.

Iran has been content to bleed Iraq to death in a war of attrition. Iraq apparently feels it has to win the war quickly, or inflict so much damage very soon, that it can negotiate a favorable or status-quo end to the war.

Iran has said in public that if Etendards and Exocets are used to hit prime Iran oil targets, Iran will close the Straits of Hormuz to all oil traffic from Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, etc. in retaliation.

We'd have instant oil panic, a move by the U.S. and allies to keep the Strait open and assure oil supplies to Europe, U.S., Japan, etc.

Our fleet and our Rapid Deployment Forces would be engaged. Reselt: endless war on soil of Iran, Moslem political turmoil in the region....

The Iranians may not be bluffing. They are trying to pressure us and Europe and Japan to pressure Iraq not to use the Mirages and Exocets.

Can we do that? Likely not. And the French have not yielded to pressure not to sell the Iraquis the Etendards and Exocets. Since Iraq owes France $4.5 billion for arms, etc., this may be France's move to end the war soon to insure repayment-in-oil of that debt.

ALIEN THOUGHTS CONTINUED ON P. 10

CHARLES PLATT

"Whatchoo wearing, honey? What's that on your head? Shit, what's wrong with you, baby?"

The globular woman in black satin, with coat-hanger reinforced antenna-braids, paused and glared at the ghetto degenerate challenging her in his quaint argot from the stained sidewalk below. "This is a science fiction convention," she explained, as if to a child. And then, with a regal air, she strolled on across the pedestrian bridge linking the Hyatt with the Convention Center. It was a two-level architectural fantasy, straight out of the 1930s THRILLING WONDER illustrations, with the costumed fans as children of tomorrow on the soaring skywalks, idly surveying the less evolved, inferior species rooting around in the primordial filth of urban decay.

That night, on the same bridge I saw Isaac Asimov cradling his Hugo protectively while admirers fawned after him and tugged at the sleeve of his atrocious green jacket. Asimov had delivered a touchingly guilt-ridden acceptance speech, apparently aware that he'd won a nostalgia vote. I was tempted to save him from any further guilt by grabbing his trophy and hurling it down into the street, where it would at least serve a useful function, as a $5 pawn ticket for some Baltimore wino. Oh, but why bother? The worldcon did what worldcons do: with more momentum than anyone could ever deflect, it reaffirmed the status-quo.

In fandom, nice guys finish first. Thus (for instance) Spider Robinson, fan-writer and critic in the folksy, incompetent tradition that fans love best, beat Bruce Sterling, whose fine work has already been anthologized in two Year's Best collections but is irrelevant in the face of his personal obscurity. Joanna Russ, whose health problems have elicited sympathy, was "welcomed back" to the field now that she poses no threat to it. BLADE RUNNER won for the memory of Phil Dick, because anyone can watch a dumb movie, whereas you actually have to read a novel such as DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP -- or for that matter, THE TRANSMIGRATION OF TIMOTHY ARCHER. And James Gunn won because his book had the name "Asimov" in its title, while Barry Malzberg's did not. Some suggested that the high price of Malzberg's hardcover counted against it in the voting, but since most fans hadn't read Gunn's book either, this wasn't really a factor.

Fans in fact, seem not to read much of anything, as I learned while drunkenly "moderating" a midnight panel titled "What's Wrong with the Hugos?." One audience member boasted: "I write the names of the guys I like at the top of the ballot, and the guys I don't like and don't want to win, I put at the bottom. The guys I haven't heard of, I leave out altogether. And all my friends vote this way, too."

Precisely! So let's award Hugos to people, not literary works that the voters don't bother to read. Let's have Hugos for Most Sociable Novelist, Funniest Raconteur, Best Room-Party Host, Smelliest Eccentric, Most Obnoxious Young Upstart, and Ancient Writer Nearest Death. (The SFWA are ahead of us on this one, with their Grand Master Award.)

Then the system would be honest. But who wants honesty? Accepting for "best editor" Ed Ferman, his assistant shyly said, "This award means a lot to Ed." By contrast, when I interviewed Ferman a year or so ago, he told me, "It's just a stupid award, I've always objected to it, and now that I've finally won it I guess I can say so." Yes, say so, but not during the ceremony, that mystic ritual reaffirming the faith. The duller and more predictable the ceremony, the better, which was perhaps why the convention committee told Barry Malzberg that they "couldn't find me" to accept Dick Geis's Hugo (I was sitting in the front row), and was why Jack Chalker was such a success as toastmaster, with his nostalgic illustrated history of the Hugo and his petulant complaints at never having won one.

Other programming at the convention was more eventful -- the science programming in particular, with star performances by Robert Forward (describing his plans for

NOTES FROM BALTIMORE

an antimatter space-drive), Jonathan Post (of JPL), and Dean Ing. Also notable was the Warner Brothers RIGHT STUFF movie promo featuring Chuck Yeager and Gordon Cooper. Yeager seemed much as Tom Wolfe describes him, but tougher, with hard gray eyes above the easy smile. He showed some of his own slides, of the X-1 rocket-plane looking like something glued together in someone's back yard from plans by Hugo Gernsback. "We had a liquid oxygen tank in the middle there, right behind the pilot and it used to vaporize and spill over when we were refueling, which was kind of nice, on account of it got so darned hot out there in the desert." And so forth.

The parties were good too. Bantam's was the most lavish, proving once again that entertainment expenditures tend to vary inversely with length of editorial tenure.

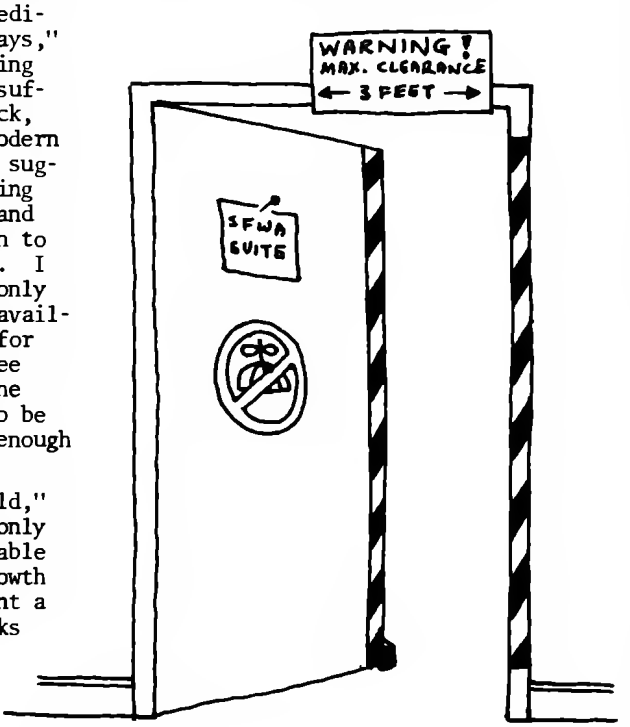
The event took place in a renovated townhouse at the end of an alley so narrow that it effectively excluded persons measuring more than three feet in diameter -- a shrewd ploy that the SFWA could profit from in future. Here I met Ian Ballantine, inventor of the paperback book, who is about to publish via Bantam a work titled CASTLES, illustrated with watercolors that took three years to produce. "Longer than most editors keep their jobs these days," Ballantine quipped, emphasizing the extent to which quality suffers at the hands of fast-buck, mass-production tactics in modern publishing. He dismissed my suggestion that people are reading less now than they used to, and also disposed of my objection to high-priced trade paperbacks. I said I felt that there were only so many book-buying dollars available, and a book that sells for $6.95 takes the place of three others at $2.25 each. But the Ballantine principle seems to be that if the product is good enough people will pay accordingly.

"When I entered this field," he pointed out, "there were only fifty bookstores in America able to pay their bills." The growth since then has obviously meant a transfer of spending, to books from other products.

Also at the Bantam party I talked to Fred Harris, the head of Author Services, L. Ron Hubbard's publicity and literary agency. Was Fred angry at the fans for cheating Ron out of the Hugo he so richly deserved? Not at all, he said -- although I get the impression his approach may be slightly more aggressive when Hubbard's new 1.1-million-word opus appears.

I had the pleasure of introducing Fred to Norman Spinrad. They had not met before, but for some reason Fred seemed to know quite a bit about Norman, who seemed a trifle edgy and didn't stop to chat for very long.

Other events blur in the mind ... I met Donald Kingsbury, told him he reminded me of A.E. van Vogt, to which he replied, that he'd used van Vogt's 800-word-scene writing system in COURTSHIP RITE ... I admired the iron constitution of Avon editor John Douglas as he consumed foul fried chicken in Crazy John's Pizza and Videogame Parlor at 4:30 A.M., before heading back to the Hilton in search, as he put it, of "the perfect party" ... I saw a woman whose large left breast had been prominently autographed by Isaac Asimov ... and a woman eight months pregnant, her enormous naked bally protruding from amid a skimpy costume of barbarian-slave-girl chain-mail ... I saw Gene Wolfe sitting in the lobby beaming at everyone; the only part of Elliptical Gene that seems wholly alive is his left foot, which when he crosses his ankle over his knee, wiggles like the tail of an amiable dog ... I spent a fuzzy afternoon in the Hyatt rooftop bar chatting to the astonishingly lovely Ennis sisters (one a Washington TV news producer, the other a New York photographer), while watching the replica of a Norwegian longboat being rowed past the harbor landscape of derelict factories by sweating fans who had paid $5 each to haul an oar in the 95-degree heat ... and finally I came back home, where people on the street looked so reassuringly normal compared with those I'd seen all weekend. No more chain mail and plump flesh; instead, just the usual well-muscled lesbians and gay men in leather caps and jackboots, here in what the fans would call the "mundane world" of New York's West Village.



A MODEST PROPOSAL TO THE OFFICERS OF SFWA.

And now, a shocking revelation. While searching for hotel stationery in the bureau drawer of a literary agent who must remain anonymous, I discovered two messily photocopied pages tucked inside the Gideon Bible. A cursory inspection revealed that this document was none other than the Client Evaluation Checklist, long suspected by writers but never proved to exist till now. If you are a young, aspiring writer, eager to find an agent to represent you, you may wonder how these people decide whether or not to take you on. Well, wonder no more. Here are the ugly facts. Score one point for each YES answer to these simple questions:

1. Do you live alone?

2. Do you live within 200 miles of New York City?

3. Do you think some publishers treat writers unfairly?

4. Do you have close friends who are successful writers?

5. Are you over forty?

6. Are you hoping to live off your writing as soon as possible?

7. Should authors stand up for their rights?

8. Should authors concern themselves with the way their work is packaged, distributed and promoted?

9. Are you a sociable person who enjoys a friendly chat?

10. Is your work better than similar fiction of its type by big-name authors?

The higher your score, the worse your chances are for finding literary representation. Why? I found the explanation on the second photocopied sheet:

1. Writers who live alone lack the emotional support system that family or friends provide. They turn to literary agents instead. Tiresome!

2. Writers closer to New York are more likely to make time-wasting visits and phone calls.

3. Writers who suspect publishers of treating them unfairly will create a fuss and alienate editors.

4. A beginning writer who has successful friends will resent his agent for not making him equally successful.

5. Writers over forty are more likely to have burned out, reached a midlife crisis, or developed ridiculous delusions of grandeur.

6. Writers who depend entirely on their books for income will cause more fuss about late payments.

7. Combative writers mean more agency work for the same amount of commission.

8. Writers who are blissfully ignorant, or apathetic, about packaging and promotion will be much easier to deal with.

9. Sociable writers waste everyone's time.

10. The new writer who thinks his work is better than books by big names is the worst case of all.

What's that you say? There's nothing here concerning the quality of the work? Well, of course, agents like to deal with quality prose. Even more, however, they like to deal with work they can sell, and writers who aren't a pain in the ass -- or so it seems.

In my next column I'll tackle a timely topic: the new growth industry of computer adventure games and programmed fiction in which the reader is allowed to choose how the plot develops. Should unqualified, untrained lay persons be allowed so much discretionary power? In other words, would WAR AND PEACE be a better book if clods like you could choose your own endings for it? These and other serious points will be addressed in detail.

GEIS

In the last half of my response to Charles Platt's letter, last issue, I wrote something I must apologize for, though it crottles my greeps and locks my jaw (but not my fingers). I said, "No, you don't mean..." and I went on to put words in his mouth and thoughts in his brain he didn't and doesn't have. A reader called me on it, and Charles himself did, too, though he later said I needn't bother to write this apology as I said I would.

So here I sit, eating words I put in another person's mouth. Ugh.

ALIEN THOUGHTS CONTINUED FROM P. 7

The world economic consequences of Iraq again free to pump an extra 6 million barrels of oil per day is almost catastrophic, since that extra oil will erode the OPEC price structure, force lower oil prices, dramatically cut the profits from oil in OPEC and in Mexico, U.K., Indonesia, Venezuela, U.S.!---and in turn force those countries to cut back spending (and cut back repaying debts, further worsening the international debt/trade crisis.

Of course, with oil declining in price, with trade shrinking dramatically, supplies of all commodities will swell, and the general price level will decline---deflation will really take hold---and further unemployment and wage cuts will be forced...in a downward spiral which. not even 300 billion dollar deficits will be able to overcome, in this country.

Because an offsetting $300 billion [and more!] will have occurred as debts are written off, as debts are not taken on, as trade/commerce shrinks. In short, a trillion dollars will be killed/wiped-out even as new govt debt is created. But not enough debt is possible because of political/economic restraints.

There must be a period---a long period---of rest, of rebuilding liquidity [savings free and clear of debt] worldwide. THEN a new, long-term period of inflation can occurr as it has before in these macro boom-bust cycles.

I know, I know, I've been unable to restrain myself again, on this subject. But I know it is the single most important area of awareness/knowledge one can possess.

The world will not end, of

ALIEN THOUGHT CONTINUED ON P. 63

TEN YEARS AGO IN SCIENCE FICTION -- FALL, 1973

BY ROBERT SABELLA

A teacher in South Carolina was arrested for teaching SLAUGHTERHOUSE-FIVE even though it was on the school's approved reading list. Members of the community considered the book pornographic, according to the recent Supreme Court decision letting the definition of pornography be determined by local standards. In North Dakota, copies of the book were burned by a school board...Paperback rights to Richard Addams' WATERSHIP DOWN went for more than $800,000... Jim Baen became editor of WORLDS OF IF so that Ejler Jacobsson could concentrate on the now-monthly GALAXY. It serialized Arthur C. Clarke's new novel RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA ... Lancer Books folded ... Isaac Asimov married Janet Jepson. It was his second marriage.

ONCE OVER LIGHTLY

BOOK REVIEWS BY GENE DEWEESE

CITIZEN VAMPIRE

By Les Daniels
Ace, Paperback, $2.50

Spanish nobleman turned vampire Don Sebastian de Villanueva is unwillingly summoned back to earth after three hundred years of an apparently peaceful "death," only to be caught up not only in the horror of his own renewed thirst but in the greater horror of the senseless violence of the French Revolution of 1789. Though there are a fair number of scenes that would, in a movie, be simply gory, particularly one involving a head remaining conscious several seconds after being guillotined, everything is handled so that the effect is sombre and disquieting rather than shocking. With historical characters like Robespierre and Dr. Guillotin and the Marquis de Sade (a comparatively pleasant enough fellow here) mixing with fictional ones, "Citizen Vampire" is as much a historical novel as a horror story, and a good one whichever category you put it in.

DAY OF THE DRAGONSTAR

By David F. Bischoff and
Thomas F. Monteleone
Berkley, Paperback, $2.75

Bischoff and Monteleone have gone Arthur C. Clarke one better in this story of a Rama-like alien ship, a 320- by 65-kilometer cylinder whose interior is reminiscent of a technology created Pellucidar filled with dinosaurs and their saurian descendants, some of whom have evolved into intelligent, human-like creatures. The first expedition into the ship is almost totally wiped out by the native wild life and the second by its human political enemies, but most of the secrets are eventually unraveled, including one that borrows from another of Clarke's stories, THE SENTINEL. There are a number of things wrong with DAY OF THE DRAGONSTAR, including unnecessarily explicit sex and slanderously vicious dinosaurs, but even so it's fast and easy reading, and you do tend to get caught up in the action and the concepts.

THE MANSIONS OF SPACE

By John Morressy
Ace, Paperback, $2.75

A cynical insterstellar trader and a member of a militaristic group out to safeguard the starlanes from the piratic excesses of the traders both visit Peter's Rock, a planet settled ages ago by religious pilgrims fleeing persecution on Earth. Both soon become involved in a galaxy-wide search for a religious relic stolen by a splinter group of the pilgrims. Though it contains many elements of old-fashioned space opera, including colorful but cardboard characters, alien worlds galore and occasional battle scenes, THE MANSIONS OF SPACE is overall a relatively quite, episodic novel that stretches over several centuries and hundreds of worlds and manages to come up with a number of unexpected twists. And the last few chapters, as the search moves ever further into unknown space and as shiptime becomes ever more compressed, have an oddly eerie feeling that I've seen in few other books.

ISAAC ASIMOV PRESENTS THE GREAT SF STORIES, VOLUMES 9 AND 10 (1947, 1948).

Edited by Isaac Asimov and
Martin H. Greenburg
DAW Books, Paperback, $3.50 each.

Maybe it's nostalgia for the years when I first started reading SF, but '47 and '48, at least as represented by these two collections, seem to have been excellent years. Among the standouts included are: Two by Ray Bradbury, including one of the first and best of what eventually became THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES; "With Folded Hands ...," Jack Williamson's first Humanoid story; Theodore Sturgeon's anti-war gem, "Thunder and Roses;" the first of H. Beam Piper's Paratime series; two shorts by John D. MacDonald from the days before he invented Travis McGee; and Fredric Brown's classic "Knock," which gives a new meaning to the old two-line horror story, "The last man on earth sat alone in a room. There was a knock on the door ...."

THE DIAMOND CONTESSA

By Kenneth Bulmer
DAW Books, Paperback, $2.50

Harry Blakey is a trajector, one of those rarities who can travel through the dimensional doors -- "casements" -- that interconnect a seemingly endless maze of parallel worlds, some civ-

ilized, some savage, almost all dangerous. The worst of the lot, though, seems to be Irunium, ruled by the ravishingly beautiful and equally vicious Contessa de Montevarchi, who loots all worlds within her reach for wealth and slaves. A sequel to 1967's THE KEY TO IRUNIUM, the present novel is a bit too thud and blunder for my taste, and hero Blakey's liberated macho attitudes aren't all that convincing or appealing, but author Bulmer keeps him hopping from world to world at such a rate that a parallel worlds freak like myself can't resist it. It's no "Warlord of the Air" but it moves fast and holds your interest.

DRAMOCLES

By Robert Sheckley
Holt, Rinehart & Wilson, $15.95

Jacket blurbs comparing DRAMOCLES to the overrated works of Stanislaw Lem, Italo Calvino and Groucho Marx almost made me ignore it entirely. After reading a few pages, however, I realized it was much more amusing than any of the three, resembling more a cross between Woody Allen and the Wizard of Id, though there are occasional lapses of imagination that really are reminiscent of Marx. Inaccurately subtitled "An Intergalactic Soap Opera," it's the story of King Dramocles of Glorm, his Destiny, his father (Otho the Weird), his daughter Drusilla and a host of other equally unlikely characters including a computer in a periwig and a whole planet full of people who travel by trampoline and who export porcupine quills to "the Uurks, a nonhuman people who had never disclosed why they needed them." If any or all of that strikes you as funny (it did me), then you'll likely enjoy at least two-thirds of DRAMOCLES' two hundred pages.

A CENTURY OF PROGRESS

By Fred Saberhagen
Tor Books, Paperback, $2.95

In 1984, sixtyish Alan Norlund is recruited by a mysterious group of time travelers to do a supposedly simple but important job in the midwest of 1933, something which he later learns is part of an attempt to assassinate Hitler in this timeline. Another even more mysterious group, however, is fighting to keep Hitler safe, perhaps even take him back to their own future. For the first couple hundred pages, A CENTURY OF PROGRESS takes its time, introducing the characters and the depression-era midwest locale vividly, and yet there is a continuing tension that keeps you racing from page to page to see what happens next. Unfortunately, that's about where the action starts speeding up and it becomes apparent that this is either the first of a series or was drastically cut by someone. (Some of the events described in the cover blurb haven't happened by the end of the book, for instance.)

Despite the uncertain and somewhat rushed ending, however, it's almost impossible to put the book down, and I'm looking forward to some sequels, where I hope some of the apparently gigantic holes in the logic are explained, along with a lot of other loose ends.

THE MANY WORLDS OF ZANDRA

By William Rotsler
Doubleday, $11.95

This second of the "Zandra" series continues the adventures of Mace Wilde in the Barsoom-like world of Zandra, to which he and a planeload of other earth people flying through the Bermuda Triangle were transported by an ancient alien machine operated by one of several barbarian Zandran tribes. Traveling by cloudship with Falana, an excessively arrogant Zandran princess reminiscent of the headstrong society debutantes of 1930s musical comedies, Wilde and his band careen from one mysterious and dangerous country to another, hardly pausing for breath between adventures. Unlike most sword-and-sorcery epics that try to be updated versions of Edgar Rice Burroughs' "John Carter of Mars" series, Rotsler's tongue-in-cheek effort doesn't fall flat after the first half dozen pages. It does get repetitious now and then, and you have to be in the right mood, but it does more often than not, evoke the same feelings now that Burroughs did thirty years ago, and that's something that Burroughs himself, on re-reading, doesn't do any more.

SOMETHING ANSWERED By Gene DeWeese
DELL/EMERALD, $3.25, November, 1983.
New occult/horror novel

REVIEWED BY RICHARD E. GEIS

A thing/entity from another dimension has existed for thousands of years in a dimensional twilight zone, periodically subject to the needs and demands of certain humans on Earth who have the unconscious power to command it.

It is in torment, but cannot refuse these commands...

This narrow-focus present-day sf novel (not fantasy, not occult, not supernatural exactly) shows us a nightmare-ridden Harold Lancing arranging a show-off party in his home town because will be filming his horror novel at that location.

We have a lovely hometown newspaper editor who offended Lancing during their high school days... We have his other "enemies" in town who are and were turned off by his defensive arrogance, selfishness and deepset paranoia. We have his religious-nut aunt, who raised him. There is the preacher who dreads Lancing's return and who campaigned against Lancing's "smutty" book. The newspaper publisher who needs the movie project to enhance the declining value of lakefront property he owns... There is Lancing's contemptuous agent...

The stage is set, the characters interact, the action begins.

People die and others are miraculously saved from death. The entity is forced to grant secret wishes...

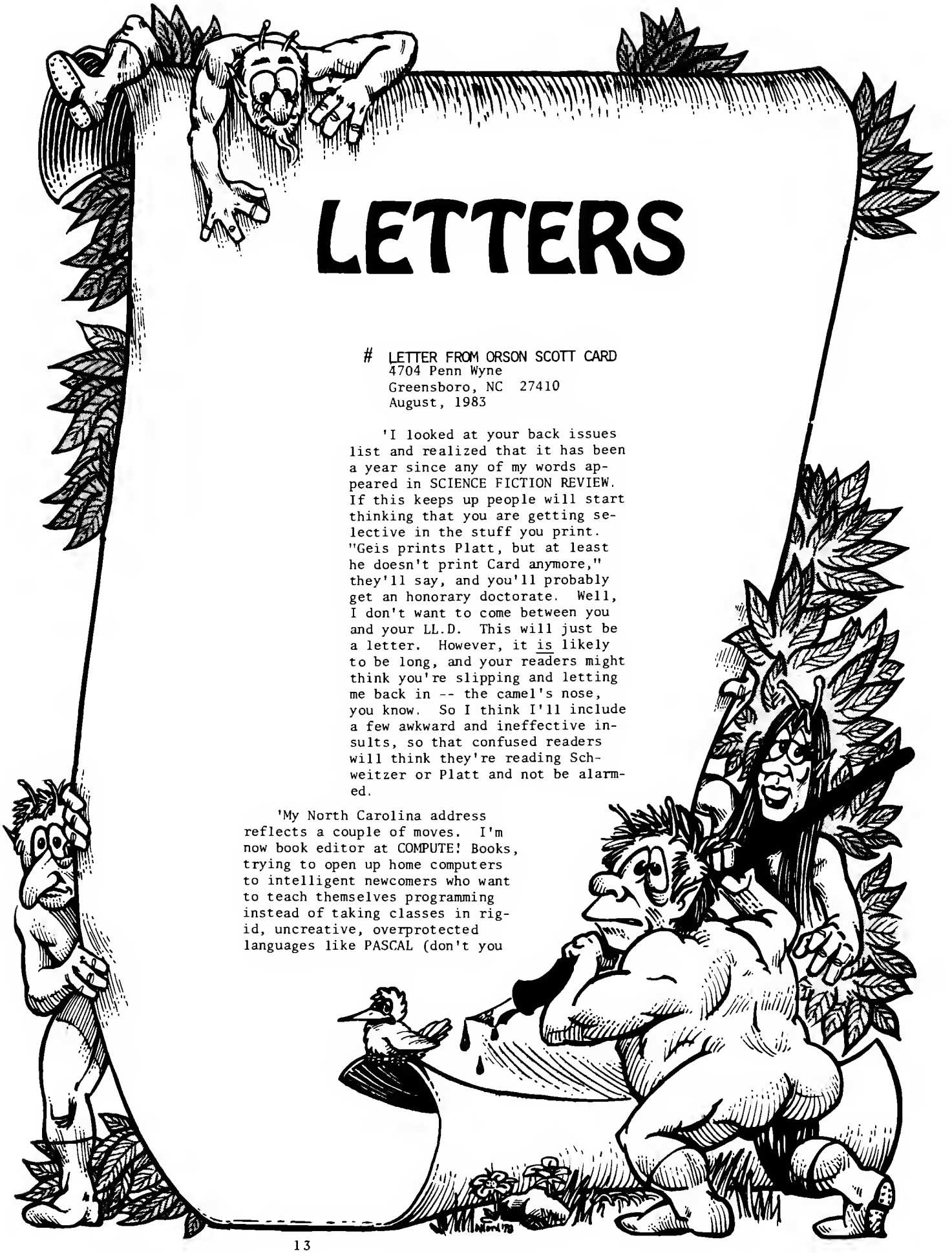
And the final, horrible crisis of nightmares-come-true is inevitably brought to reality in spite of nything the terrified Lancing can do.

But the actuality is subtly and dramatically and terrifyingly different from what is expected by the reader. DeWeese skillfully uses character and event and motive to effect a constantly surprising story.

This is a very satisfying read. The detailing of Harold Lancing's warped mind---his cunning paranoid reasoning---is very well done. All the people in this novel are very real.

An expert job of writing.

NOTE: The novel sold to TOR, and Gene, by accident, learned it was scheduled for November release by an apparently new entity--Dell/Emerald. Sometimes the author is the last to know. A brochure was sent by the publisher to the Milwaukee, Wisconsin library, announcing the book.



LETTERS

LETTER FROM ORSON SCOTT CARD
4704 Penn Wyne
Greensboro, NC 27410
August, 1983

'I looked at your back issues list and realized that it has been a year since any of my words appeared in SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. If this keeps up people will start thinking that you are getting selective in the stuff you print. "Geis prints Platt, but at least he doesn't print Card anymore," they'll say, and you'll probably get an honorary doctorate. Well, I don't want to come between you and your LL.D. This will just be a letter. However, it is likely to be long, and your readers might think you're slipping and letting me back in -- the camel's nose, you know. So I think I'll include a few awkward and ineffective insults, so that confused readers will think they're reading Schweitzer or Platt and not be alarmed.

'My North Carolina address reflects a couple of moves. I'm now book editor at COMPUTE! Books, trying to open up home computers to intelligent newcomers who want to teach themselves programming instead of taking classes in rigid, uncreative, overprotected languages like PASCAL (don't you

dare write an unstructured program, you wimp!). It's exciting, exhilerating, creative work and I love it. It's been a while since SF gave me as much sense of satisfaction as writing a good "trivial" program. The engineers and "non-trivial" programmers are ghetto-ing themselves in hardcore and business program design, where they belong and we who believe the computer is the best of the story-telling, artmaking media are having our own way with the home computer.

It's as appropriate to write gosh-wow science fiction about computers today as it was to write science fiction about airplanes in 1933. You could do it, with miracle planes that flew without propellors or planes that could stay aloft forever or other things that had not arrived yet, but it just didn't have the thrill that spaceships, which had not yet come to exist, still held. Some people in those days did read thrilling airplane stories and make model airplanes and, for all I know, go to airplane conventions -- but it certainly was not the cutting edge of the future.

'Why isn't there more SF about the computer revolution? Because the computer has ceased to be a miracle and is fast becoming television. As the pundits have it, it is the new hearth, in many homes replacing the television as television replaced radio and as radio replaced knitting and whittling by the fireplace.

'Unlike radio and television however, the programs available can be as particular as you like. It isn't just an effeminate proscenium art, where the audience peers into the opening at whatever miracle has been prepared. For perhaps the first time since theatre and storytelling stopped being spontaneous and religious, the audience can be artists as much as they like. The storytelling in videogames is as yet rudimentary, but the interaction is intense; and as long as computers are built to be open, the truly participatory audience members have no limit to how much they can create. Computers are still a valid subject for storytelling, but what many of us are discovering is that they are an even more effective medium for storytelling.

'Publishers are fond of talking about how their books must compete for the "entertainment dollar" but they miss the mark. Dollars are merely one way that time is represented in our culture. What publishers and writers and producers and everybody else compete for is not money, really (though that's how they measure it), but time, and time (both money-earning time and reading time) is bestowed on whatever is new enough to be interesting and familiar enough to be trusted.

'"Radical, transforming change is part of reality, and all other genres ignore it," quoth Ron Lambert, and I somewhat agree. But it is curious that such a remark, and his rhapsodic embrace of ever-increasing knowledge, in which I join him, are provoked by a debate about whether science fiction is being too much polluted by fantasy. Even you, Dick, have descended into the mire, speaking pejoratively of "science fantasy".

'Come now, are there still grownups who believe that genre boundaries are built like Great Walls along the terrain of story-telling, keeping Civilization on the hither side safe from the barbarians prowling beyond it? Genres are publishers' way of coping with Audiences. "Bodice rippers are in," goes the whisper, and everybody's got a bodice ripper. Remember all the mafia books after THE GODFATHER? Publishers pursue every bestseller as epidemiologists pursue every outbreak of a volatile disease hoping to isolate the single cause; the publishers, of course, intend to replicate rather than cure.

'And to a degree, the stategy works. It works, though, not because some publishers are smart and others are dumb. It works because some happen to satisfy an audience and others don't.

'Just to complicate things, the audience evolves. No one controls or understands it. Suddenly a cult book, passed from hand to hand, becomes a fad book. Tolkien is all the rage. Inevitably SWORD OF SHANNARA appears. Do people buy it? Yes -- but would they have in 1949?

'Why did so many people crave Tolkien in the sixties and not so many in the fifties? What was the difference? (Ignore Elton Elliott there in the corner, drooling and mumbling about "escape.") They bought it in the sixties because it fed what they were hungry for. What particular element in it fed that hunger? No one knows. Publishers, of course, tried every angle to duplicate it. But it all comes down to this: the readers loved to dwell in that world and did not want to leave it, and so bought whatever promised to take them back there.

'By world I don't mean Middle Earth. I mean Tolkien's casual universe. His Way Things Happen. For those to whom LORD OF THE RINGS was a revelation, the imitations were satisfying only insofar as they awoke echoes and redolences of that revelation -- or provided a revelation of their own.

'Almost any novel, even STAR RIDERS OF REN, will probably give such a revelation to somebody. If it gives it to many people, it is popular. If it gives it to five people, the writer goes back to washing dishes in Detroit. If the revelation comes to a significant number of the Right People, it becomes literature. If the revelation comes most often to science fiction readers (or an editor guesses that it might), it is science fiction.

'As a child in the fifties I got that revelation from "Call Me Joe" and others in best-of anthologies in the Santa Clara Public Library. Later, Heinlein, Asimov, Clarke, Bradbury, Ellison -- don't we all reenact the entire history of science fiction? But at the same time, I was reading THE SOURCE and A SEPARATE PEACE and FOUNTAINHEAD and finding revelation every bit as powerful. More recently I found it, in varying degrees, from Evangeline Walton, Patricia McKillip, Mary Renault -- and yet also found it in FAERIE QUEEN and HOUSE OF FAME and LIGHT IN AUGUST and even some of the much-despised medieval romances like HAVELOCK and KING HORN.

'Which genre is "good?"

'Whichever one I like to read, of course.

'Which is fine. We select ourselves as members of certain audiences. It says nothing about us except that it names, not our hunger, but what satisfies it. Are all readers of gothic romance the same person? Do all SF readers hunger for the same thing? Is it not possible for two people who love DUNE to disagree violently over "Death and Designation Among the Asadi?" Must I hide my Donaldson behind the cover of the latest ANALOG lest I be publicly shamed?

'But I don't blame Elton Elliott or you for damning writing you don't like as "escapist." It is as inevitable that genrists moan about the purity of their little sect as that racists have a sharp eye out for miscegenation. Fantasy is all right, as long as it knows its place.

((No, No, I don't decry escapist writing. Hell, my whole writing career has been in escapism of one type or another. I applaud escapism, I revel in it. My only complaint is that so much escapism writing is so bad. And I approve of fantasy--when well done. As I approve any kind of writing...when well done.

((If I were a purist re sf, I'd never read, review or list fantasy or the occult in SFR.

((My only problem with pure (or denatured) fantasy is believability; The magic ring or the magic sword or the magic, power-laden jewel have got to be made credible somehow, so that I can believe what is happening. I like rules and difficulty in magic. Otherwise it's like playing tennis with the net down and the lines painted out.))

'The irony though, in all these discussions, is that we are all outcasts, struggling for position on a dungheap. I was amused to read a "My Say" column in a recent PUBLISHER'S WEEKLY in which a writer of feminist (or was it black?) novels decried the way that her kind of book got treated like a genre instead of being treated as real literature. She said, in effect, "I write novels, not feminist novels or black novels." I have heard this plaintive cry before -- haven't you?

'But ah! Here's the delicious part. It wasn't enough for her to say that her type of book was "as good as" literature. She had to make it very clear that her kind of book also wasn't escapist trash like romances and spy novels and science fiction.

'Mr. Elliott, are you listening? We are all mulattoes in a 1930s Southern niggertown, ducking our heads and saying, "Yes, sir, Boss, but at least I ain't as black as him." We are all sitting in the back of the bus, we are all riding in the Jim Crow car. We don't accomplish much by pointing at each other and shouting, "Nigger!"

'Who is at the top of this elaborate literary caste system? You know the names. They get TABAs and Pulitzer Prizes or review the writers who do. And, with a few exceptions (as with every genre), they all write the same formula story. The plot can be anything, or nothing, but the main character must be a creative person who is misunderstood by others as he or she struggles to communicate with them. In other words, the main character is usually an Author, either openly or in disguise. And whether he is or not, chances are that the voice of the author of the story is really the star. The puppeteer insists on crowding onto the stage with the puppets. Look at this beautiful style, says the writer. See this dazzling effect. If you can't understand what I am saying, but you still admire it, then you are literate. If you think it's impenetrable shit, you're a peasant.

'I have a little literary still hidden off in the woods here in North Carolina. I keep boiling books in the pot, and when all the style is stripped away, along with the particularity of scene and the trappings of realism, all that's left is the plain tale, 200 proof.

'And when you're down to the plain tale, you can't tell the genres apart. At the heart of every Bellow or Hemingway or Joyce or James novel, there is a little old-fashioned romance. It is the unperpinning of everything. Under the skin, humankind still believes only a few plain tales, but we believe them very deeply, they are very important to us, and we must hear them over and over again. These tales are what make us human.

'So we take them from TV, or the movies, or videogames, or the Bible, or science fiction, or fantasy, or gothic, or mystery. We select ourselves into audiences, not on the basis of the tales we believe are important or true, but rather on the basis of the illusions surrounding them, on what we want to or can believe in the details of the author's creation. Elton Elliott cannot suspend disbelief long enough to read a fantasy. Like any person with a congenital deficiency, he should not be ashamed of it -- he should learn to live with it as best he can and try to function in society anyway. He needs his science; I need plausible societies and layers of allegory; and English professors, poor souls, need their long passages of omphaloskepsis.

'All this discussing of science fiction versus fantasy has revealed nothing so much as how successful the indoctrination by the current literary elite has been. Elliott should have bit his tongue before saying that fantasy was bad because it was "escapist" and denied "reality." Those are the very words used by the literary elite to keep all of us in our place, a race apart from real literature.

'All storytelling is escape in the sense that it transports the reader into an imaginary world created by a storyteller. There are no exceptions to this, no matter how painstakingly "realistic" the writer is, no matter how good his science or how detailed his evocation of contemporary Manhattan. Escape is only "bad" if it is into a milieu that I, who judge you, don't believe. Or, in other words, your taste in stories defines what audience you belong to, and if you are not in the audience of James Joyce, you are swine.

'James Joyce? But he's been dead for years. His work was all finished two generations, three generations ago. What happened to the literary pendulum? Why hasn't the Bloomsbury Group and its spiritual kin been replaced by movements that denounce their works as so many horse droppings? Why are they, with minor ups and downs, still considered Excellent, part of the canon of good literature, the writers who are Worth Discussing?

'Because all the people who envied and admired them, who could not be part of the Bloomsbury Group but wished they were, who could not create a world like Lawrence but wished they could, who could not tell stories like Hemingway but still wanted to belong to his invisible brotherhood, all those people got doctorates in English or editorial positions in hardcover houses or became reviewers for the New York TIMES. And they taught new generations of writers what was Good and what was Trash. And that new generation believed or it damn well didn't get tenure, so that the same gospel is being taught in high schools and colleges today. In the name of heaven, do you realize they're still teaching poor, defenseless children to read Theodore Dreiser and Henry James? They should be gathering dust in dark corners of libraries, waiting, if they're lucky, for the next pendulum swing and their rediscovery by a still newer generation. But they're not. They are zombies, artificially alive even as they decay before our eyes.

'The literary mainstream attracts readers only by training innocent minds to think they enjoy trite, self-congratulatory, and calculatedly outrageous writing. The literary mainstream hasn't produced a firstrate storyteller in an embarrassingly long time. Science fiction and fantasy are only read by untrained volunteers, and yet the field has produced the greatest stories of this century. I dare say that when Bellow and Updike are footnotes, the Foundation Trilogy will still be alive.

'Instead of wasting time attacking each other's tastes, it would be far more productive to liberate us all. The teaching of modern English literature in high school and college, as it is carried on today, perpetuates the caste system that makes it impossible for Heinlein or Tolkien to be publicly known for what they are: the best storytellers in the English language in their generation. Instead of crusading against the fact that some stories that you don't like are being called science fiction, why not declare a jihad against the teaching of any fiction written after 1750? Let stories speak for themselves, before the embalmers of academia can get them all lined up in their little rows of coffins.

'Pause for breath. Get hold of yourself, Scott. This isn't Congress, you fool. Your filibuster won't accomplish anything. Nobody's listening anyway, they're all gone off to look at the Gilliland cartoons.

'Science fiction and fantasy writers alike, whether or not they're speaking to each other, have to go out with all the other genre writers and compete for the public's attention and belief and trust. We still live like Twain and Dickens and Shakespeare and Pope and Wordsworth and Austen and Stowe and Conrad and everybody else, telling stories as best we can, and continuing to write if enough readers like our work well enough to keep paying for it, and sometimes even when they don't. Our audience won't bestow tenure.

'That's what matters, I think. Our stories are still read because real readers want to read them, or they aren't read at all. It hardly matters whether the significant power source in the tale is disguised as science and is believed all the time or is called magic and is believed only while reading. It doesn't make any internal difference to the stories being told, it only selects the audience. I would love to watch Mr. Elliott contort himself trying to show how the function of atomics and telepathy and psychohistory within the Foundation series differs significantly from the Force in STAR WARS or the ring and the palantiri in LORD OF THE RINGS. They are the protagonist's source of power, that's all. Mr. Elliott simply likes it better if the source of power comes in metal and plastic boxes like his stereo or wristwatch instead of in an ancient ring or an old man's lore. Fanatics of every age and ideology have had the habit of defining good as "like me" and evil as "not like me." Fortunately, evolution selects against the most extreme cases.

'And if it turns out that fantasy has indeed had its day and good old sci-fi comes back just the way Mr. Elliott wants it to, he will not be "right" -- he will simply have won at Family Feud. He will have correctly guessed what the largest percentage of the audience would do. Let us all chip in and give him a toaster.

'As to your counter-contest, finding bad opening sentences of published works, I think your contributors will reveal more about their biases than about the sentences they select. The long, intricate sentences of a certain group of 19th-century novelists are easy to laugh at now, whether Bullwer-Lytton wrote them or not, but their only real sin is being out of fashion.

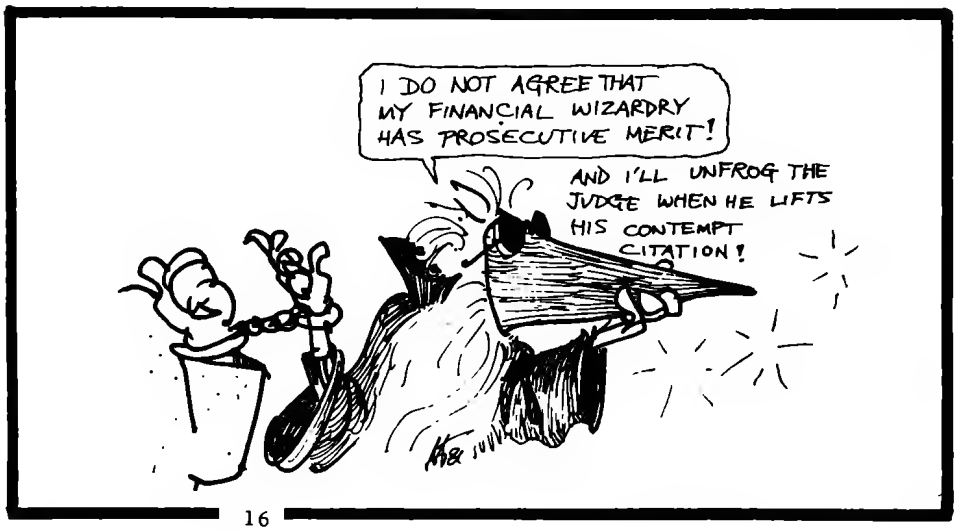
'I am annoyed by critics who hold up individual sentences for ridicule or praise -- never mind that I've done it myself. No sentence has its true effect outside the context of its story; at the same time, it can be argued that any sentence in any story is perfect because it perfectly conveys the narrative voice. All critics prove by despising a sentence is that they prefer not to hear stories told in that voice.

'Your comment about Saint JFK is well noted. The double standard of the media is painfully obvious -- but only to people who remember the past and compare it to the present. It's only a self-serving myth that journalists tell us the news. They simply use the news as an excuse to tell us the story they really want us to believe, which is that they are the saviors of mankind and if we only believe in them they will cleanse our society of all iniquity. The frightening thing is that they believe it themselves. The personalities that would have been sincere revivalists and preachers in the 1600s and 1700s are drawn to journalism and news broadcasting today. It is their sincerity that is most dangerous -- they aren't consciously lying and so they convince us easily, never mind that they're biased and dull-witted and easily deceived. We all dwell, all the time, in the world that they create, only breaking out of it by great effort and for a fleeting moment.

'In the meantime, if the end of civilization as we know it is coming, I hope it comes before I pay off all my back taxes. If I've given the government the last farthing and then it all blows up, I'm going to be so mad.'

LETTER FROM RONALD R. LAMBERT
2350 Virginia
Troy, MI 48084
August 12, 1983

'The super-evolved human of the future may not necessarily



evoke instinctive feelings of revulsion in "normals." Pertinent to this is a very interesting article, "Evolution's Child," by Pamela Weintraub, which appeared in the August, 1983 issue of OMNI. The article relates learned speculation that the genetic factors which are responsible for both increased longevity and increased intelligence are those which tend to produce neotenic characteristics. Individuals who are structured according to a more juvenile pattern will tend to mature more slowly, age more slowly, and have a longer period of reproductive activity. As humans develop an increasingly more juvenile ratio of head to body size, they will have increasingly larger brains and thus presumably become more intelligent. Some researchers believe that it is these neotenic gene factors that are what primarily separate man from ape. The actual genetic difference between man and ape is about 1% -- a smaller difference even than exists between horses and donkeys. But because the genes in man that are different govern development, the consequences are profound. Our development is arrested at an early stage; in effect, we are fetal apes, with the large heads and erect skeletal structure characteristic of unborn apes. Furthermore, there is evidence that humans possess instincts which favor the process of increasing neoteny. We instinctively feel more fond and protective of children which show the most neotenic characteristics. In a word, they appear cute to us.

'Genetic engineers can only accelerate this ongoing evolutionary process if these speculations are right. Any attempt to increase intelligence and longevity in humans would require modifications in the genes involved in neoteny, thus producing more juvenile-appearing characteristics in outward shape. The super humans of the future may look cute! After all, some researchers who have worked extensively with gorillas claim that gorillas seem to regard humans as cute (this would explain why the first pre-hominid was not killed by its simian mother -- she may have even favored it over her other more normal offspring). So why shouldn't homo sapiens regard homo superior as cute?

'However, as I pointed out in my last letter, we have reached the point where our evolution need no longer depend on genes and chromosomes. If we can interface our brains directly with computers and use microprocessors to augment our minds, then we will not need to grow bigger brains to become super-intelligent. Likewise, if we can figure out the biochemistry of aging and find chemical means for counteracting the aging process, then we will not need to regress any further toward a more juvenile stage of development in order to extend our lifespans. The advantage of becoming superhuman through artificial augmentation is that we ourselves -- the present generation -- can become superhuman. If we rely on a genetic approach, only our children can become superhuman. We would be left out. Of course, we could take both approaches -- genetically engineering the next generation to be superhuman, while artificially augmenting ourselves. That way we could keep up with our precocious young.

'As for reactionaries trying to prevent any of this from happening on religious grounds or any other -- these are the same sort of people who tried to stop the spread of literacy and keep scholarship under the control of the church during the Dark Ages. They did not succeed. A new technological development -- the printing press -- beat them.'

((Don't think so. If sad, pitiable children with big eyes and pudgy little bodies started taking over corporations and jobs and making fortunes their sweet, loveable qualities would disappear. As long as they are no economic danger... okay.

((You are an idealist, aren't you? People with biochips in their brains and chemically augmented lifespans would be an elite--and the poor and deprived and old (too old to invest all that chip/instruction/medicine in) would cause all kinds of lethal problems: riots, religious jihads, "redneck" hit squads... Envy and fear would make the elite lifespan shorter than expected, I think. The instinctive fear of differentness in our genes---as the current human template acted to preserve itself---would result in a kind of genocide. There is an enormous conservatism, a vast inertia, in human society and in our genetic makeup.))

LETTER FROM DARRELL SCHWEITZER
113 Deepdale Rd.
Strafford, PA 19087
July 30, 1983

'You mention that you get reports that I am something of a joke in some SF circles. Do you think I don't know that? There are lots of reasons for it. One is the Freshman Syndrome. (Most of what follows has nothing to do with writing, but with the social standing of writers in the fan/pro SF community.) In a sense becoming a pro is like graduating from high school and going on to college. The former Big Man On Campus becomes a mere freshman. People who were visibly fans before becoming professionals are seldom taken seriously. There's no novelty. The new writer is not someone no one has met. It's, "Oh, him," and a shrug.

'Then there's the fact that I have been working in fringe areas, as far as your average SF fan or pro is concerned. Your typical convention-goer, seeing me on a panel, has never read anything I have written, except maybe my SFR columns. They don't read AMAZING or FANTASTIC, much less WEIRDBOOK or any of the other small fantasy magazines. They don't buy THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES or SWORDS AGAINST DARKNESS and they have probably never seen a Donning book. This is all very different at a World Fantasy Con or even a NECon (Northeast Regional Fantasy Con), where they do know who I am, and they even come up to me with books to autograph that I didn't sell them.

'And you know as well as I do that in professional circles it is impolite to talk about quality. I don't knock this. This is a necessary social convention, because you often talk with or even become friends with people whose writing you don't respect at all. It keeps feathers unruffled. So your standing in the eyes of fellow professionals is almost totally a matter of how much money you make. I make very little. Some people make more for a single short story sale than I do in an entire year, and they know it.

'I don't play the social role of pro very well either. One person was even candid enough to tell me that I'm not enough of a stuffed shirt to do it convincingly. I fraternize with the fans too much without making any attempt to maintain superior status. (Which is something most neopros do deliberately. Big time pros don't have to.) So I've come up through the ranks with making

any attempt to cut myself off from those ranks afterwards. Norman Spinrad once mentioned (I think it was in a LOCUS column) that the writer is at an advantage when perceived as exotica, the Prince From Another Land. Well, in East Coast fandom I am perceived as one of the local peasants who got somewhat uppity.

'I can't say that I plan to do much about this. I didn't become a pro for purposes of social climbing. That strikes me as the most insincere and vain of all possible reasons. I have far more respect for someone who candidly admits being in it all for the money. As Lovecraft once wrote, hack writing is a perfectly honest trade, just like plumbing or bricklaying, and as such deserves some respect.

'In the meanwhile I meet fans who tell me I'm the most approachable pro they've ever met. This is not particularly a bad thing. The big difference between me and Charles Platt is that while I may not be taken too seriously, he is actively reviled. He has enemies, lots and lots of them, and I don't.

'One of the things I've learned, by the way, from fans who find me so easy to approach, is that I seem to be developing a reputation for hating science fiction. This is mostly a result of recent columns in SFR (after I finish the one on horror, I will do one on science fiction; so there), particularly the statement that what is wrong with fantasy today is that it has "sunk down to the level of science fiction."

'This is true, in a publishing sense, but it is readily misinterpreted. This doesn't mean that all science fiction is bad, or that I despise it, but that, between the good books, there are large numbers of utterly routine books churned out, which are designed to make a small profit and vanish, like literary mayflies. Most of the Ace Doubles will never be reprinted. Many DAW books won't either. We all know the type. The unhappy novelty is that there are now fantasy books like that, lots of them. It used to be that virtually every fantasy book published was done with some modicum of literary ambition. Now there are racks and racks of product. I am as bored with these as you are, probably more so. You're quite right that on the basis of a few outstanding books publishers have stuffed the market to the barfing point with imitations. You're also right that these imitations are developing into a kind of escapist, nonchallenging genre akin to women's historical romances. I've said as much before.

'But, for lack of a better term, we must distinguish between the genre fantasy and the literary fantasy, the latter being the kind that has been around for millenia. The reason that it is so universal is that it enables the writer to say things, important things, which are not possible to express in any other form. Right now, as always, most of the best "literary" fantasies are being published outside the genre, as mainstream. The most interesting new fantasy to appear in the last few months has been Russell Hoban's PILGERMAN. Then again there are the works of John Gardner, THE WANDERING UNICORN (Lainez), and others. There are good fantasies to be found in the children's and young adult categories -- Jane Yolen's work, for example. There are good books in the fantasy genre too, but less of them, I suspect, and they're much harder to find.

LETTER FROM TED WHITE

1014 N. Tuckahoe Street
Falls Church, VA 22046
August 9, 1983

'I have no idea who Arnie Fenner is, but his letter reveals him to be ignorant of that which he speaks when he discusses the fanzine Hugos. It's a shame, Dick, that you didn't bother to correct him but fell back on a little gloating instead.

'Of course, circulation is the primary consideration when it comes to fanzine Hugos -- and it always has been, right back to the very first one -- which went, in 1955, to FANTASY TIMES. No one who was around then (as both you and I were) thought FANTASY TIMES was the best fanzine around. It was a newsletter of SF professional doings, only quasi-literate and full of gosh-wows about the next issue of every prozine. In no way could FANTASY TIMES (later SF TIMES) compare with any of the better fanzines of the time, including your own PSYCHOTIC. However, FANTASY TIMES went after subscriptions (and did not trade with other fanzines) and had a substantially larger circulation than most fanzines. More important, it was seen and read by a number of people who were on the fringes of fandom and did not get any other fanzines. Inevitably, these people's votes swamped the votes of more knowledgable fans.

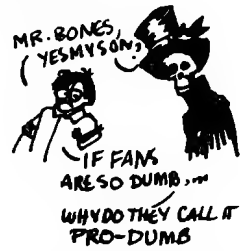
'The situation still pertains. No one could call LOCUS a good fanzine except someone who had seen few if any other fanzines. LOCUS does not serve fandom -- it serves prodom, as a newsletter and market guide. In comparison to LOCUS, SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW is much more a fanzine -- in fact, I think it is a fanzine, purely and simply, despite all other factors, because your attitude in it is "fannish" -- not coldly formal -- but compared to fanzines like TAPPEN, WARHOON, BOONFARK and others, SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW is not a very good fanzine because its focus is narrower and the writing quality is not as high.

'But most fanzines have severely limited circulations -- 300 is tops and 150 is more typical -- for two related reasons. The first is the amount of money and work that goes into a larger circulation -- more money spent on paper, ink, etc., more work collating, more money spent on postage -- and the second is that fanzines derive much of their particular qualities from the fact that they are circulated to a group of people who comprise a community and are known to each other. Three hundred seems to be the upper limit on both aspects. But with well over a thousand people nominating and voting for Hugos, obviously most fanzines will be unknown to the majority.

'Fenner is one of that majority. His ignorance is appalling. What he is quoting as "fanzines" are in fact not really fanzines at all, but what we now recognize as a separate type of publication, of which TRUMPET was a forerunner: semi-prozines. Typically, these are much more expensively produced (their production budgets typically run ten times those of most real fanzines) and are not given away (as fanzines are) but are sold, especially through specialty book stores. WHISPERS, FANTASY NEWSLETTER, et al, are not fanzines and should not be confused with fanzines. They are not published for the same reasons as are fanzines and do not have the same aims. Comparing them with fanzines is like comparing a moped with a ten-speed racing bike. Both have two wheels and both have roughly the same speed range, but there the resemblances stop; one is self-powered and the other is not.

'Reamy didn't take "a lot of flack because TRUMPET was 'too beautiful,' and his circulation

was 'too high' and not using a mimeo just wasn't fannish." I do not recall Reamy taking much flack in the first place over TRUMPET, but what complaints there were centered on the fact that TRUMPET was a lovely, expensively-produced piece of garbage. Reamy didn't seem to care what the words in TRUMPET were so long as they were surrounded by photos of scantily clad people and his own artistic rip-offs of muscle-magazine male nudes. Nice to look at, but not worth reading. (Few people remember that Tom Reamy was originally known to fandom as an artist, and that as an editor of prose he simply didn't give much of damn. In this respect he was simply following in the footsteps of Dan Adkins and SATA ILLUSTRATED.)



'The crux of the problem where the fan Hugos are concerned (and I speak as the fool who created two of them) is that there are too few fans connected with Worldcons, either as members of the Committees or as attendees and voters. There are probably less than 1,000 people in the U.S. who are participants in any aspect of mainstream fanzine fandom, and significantly fewer (200 to 300) participate in Hugo voting procedures. They are outnumbered by people who think of themselves as fans but decline to participate in fanzine fandom. Why these people arrogate to themselves the right to judge the best fan writer, the best fan artist, and the best fanzine, when they are demonstrably ignorant of many if not all of the nominated contenders, by their own admission, I cannot guess. But if someone does vote for SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW or LOCUS when they have not seen, or read the other nominated publications, it certainly makes the ultimate award to SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW or LOCUS far less meaningful. But, as I pointed out earlier, the fanzine Hugo has been tainted since the very first. It has almost never gone to the year's best fanzine, but only to the most popular title among fringefans.

'For that reason, I supported last year in Chicago the Feder Amendment to delete all fan categories from the Hugo Awards. I regret that it lost to an unweildly new category for semi-prozines.

((But didn't the Trufans pick up their marbles and go off in a huff a few years ago and create the FAAN Awards? But they found that very small beer, didn't they? They really lusted for a HUGO! And the only way to get those was to change the rules and kick out LOCUS and SFR and a few others so the low-circulation "pure" fanzines could have a chance at winning. Ah, but what if I were to start a small circulation trufanzine of my own? And won according to the new rules? Would the rules have to be changed again because I'm too well known? Would I be vicious enough to do that? I haven't decided yet. But I am pissed at being kicked out of fandom, after 25-30 years.))

'On a realted topic, F.M. Busby may be interested to hear that BATTLEFIELD EARTH missed the Hugo ballot by only fifteen nominations. That's not very many, and I gather the only reason it didn't make it was the lateness of the Trimbles' campaign to nominate it, which had only a couple of weeks in which to drum up nominations before the nomination deadline. A cynical campaign, that one.

'Finally, I was interested to read both Harlan's and Charles Platt's letters about Peter Nichols' Phil Dick piece.

'I was on a Phil Dick Memorial Panel at this year's Westercon. Also on the panel were Dick Lupoff, Grania Davis, Sherry Gottlieb and Paul Williams. We started off making noises about Phil's undeniable importance as a writer to the field and to us personally. But gradually the top came off the can of worms. Lupoff accused Robert Anton Wilson of feeding Phil's paranoia and we began dealing with his Dark Side.

'Harlan's letter touches on the same aspect of Phil. I knew Phil as a friend from 1964 to around 1970. He put me up in his house. He conducted I-Ching readings for me. He used a picture of me on the Penguin edition of MAN IN A HIGH CASTLE (as a jape). He asked me to finish DEUS IRAE after he'd bogged down fifty (ms.) pages into it. (When I decided I couldn't, I brought Roger Zelazny into it.) We corresponded, visited and phoned each other. In a late-sixties issue of (I think) WARHOON, Phil said I understood his work better than anyone else. Yet by 1972 we were estranged and by the middle seventies he savaged me in a long interview. Why? I never understood why at the time although the interview, which I read in 1979, offered several good clues. I turned from a friend and a fellow writer (who admired his work), into an editor. And as an editor I did awful things, like telling him that his novel, THE FIRST IN YOUR FAMILY, had no ending and needed a better title. I asked him if A LINCOLN, SIMULACRUM would be an okay title for the AMAZING serialization and if he could come up with an ending for it. At his suggestion, I wrote a 3,000-word ending and sent it to him for him to accept, reject, or (I hoped) build upon. He sent it back saying it was "perfect" and changing only three words. I knew it wasn't perfect, but we had a deadline and I ran it with his express permission. I thought we were still friends. When DAW published it (as WE CAN BUILD YOU) "my" ending was missing. I asked Phil about it at the 72 Worldcon in LA (probably the last time I saw him face to face) and he lied to me, telling me it had been Don Wollheim's decision.

'In his interview he lied further, distorting the incident and having me say, "Did you see what they did to our book?" in order to sneer at me for my "audacity" in "claiming" the book as partly "mine." These cheap-shit editors! Three weeks later, at a Secondary Universe convention in Iowa I asked Wollheim about it and he told me that Phil had insisted on removing my ending and that he "hated" it. He probably did, too. But rather than simply tell me that, he lied, both at the time and afterwards, and he was still lying (in self-justification) in his interview. Well, shit. The novel had sat unsold in Scott Meredith's files for ten years (he wrote it in 1960, the first piece of SF written after his failed attempts to break into the mainstream with novels like CONFESSIONS OF A CRAP ARTIST) and had I not serialized it in AMAZING I think it would have sat there, still unsold, for at least another ten years.

'Phil held editors in contempt. His paranoia where editors were concerned was unbounded. I assume without knowing more than Harlan has written here, that this was his problem with Ed Ferman (an editor for whom I have considerable respect). He used to complain to me (in the late sixties) about

Terry Carr (the editor of his Ace Specials), usually unfairly. This was one aspect of Phil's dark side and there were others, some having to do with his relationships with women. As a younger writer who really looked up to Phil for many years, I had a lot of trouble dealing with this side of the man. Now I suspect that my admiration for Phil was the strongest factor in our friendship and that he preferred me as a sycophant. I dunno. It no longer matters now.'

CARD FROM ROBERT BLOCH
2111 Sunset Crest Dr.
Los Angeles, CA 90016
August 4, 1983

'Interesting issue -- and one of its most interesting aspects is the use and mis-use of the term "fantasy." Its current meaning would probably confuse Messrs. Boucher and McComas and a lot of other people. A lot of its current examples confuse me. I guess fantasy today is anything that has a unicorn in it, or at least a quest. It might be helpful as suggested, to establish some definition of both fantasy and SF so that the detractors of each genre would at least know what exactly to malign. Personally, I'm astonished at the vehemence that's been unleashed. It seems a trifle ridiculous.'

((The problem is with those stories and novels which have magic occurr on distant planets! And which have fringe sf elements surrounding a fantasy story core. Verrry difficult! Of little matter, too, since genre fantasy is racked on the stands with genre sf. And the readers accept this clumping. I don't know of a specialist bookstore which has a "fantasy" and "sceince fiction" separation.))

LETTER FROM JOHN W. TAYLOR
1017 10th Street, South
Brookings, SD 57006
12 August 1983

'When I teach my SF literature course, I pass your zine around in order to demonstrate a semiprozine at its finest (I contrast it with crudzines, genzines, APAs, perzines, prozines and as many of the other sub-sub-genres I can dredge up). The latent fans among my students seem to respond to your publication. It does not look stuffy and threatening like EXTRAPOLATION; it is obviously not a throw-off-in-one-night crudzine; it is more personal than LOCUS; etc. In any case, they appear to be attracted to the serious intent tempered by the ironic humor often present in the writing or illos.

'Personally, I enjoy your reactionary conservativism and view your publication as a good analog in SF terms for W.F. Buckley's NATIONAL REVIEW. Whatever your political persuasion, I don't think that comparison is in any literary way invidious. Your mordant wit, passionately pugnatious intelligence, world-weary facade, abiding faith in the rationality of the printed word, when well-selected and well-driven home, all qualify you as Buckleyesque. Would that you had a wealthy publisher as a safety net and a set of well-heeled cronies who would assure a much wider distribution.

'Out here in the flatland wilds of South Dakota I constantly have to resist the crushing Puritanism, the fear of freedom, the virulent hatred of the life of the imagination. As Ursula LeGuin says in "Why Americans are Afraid of Dragons" people who grow up with misshapen or nonexistent imaginations are "eggplants." Around here there are bumper crops indeed. I read your publication to nourish that sensawonda and to reaffirm my belief that the frontier most worth exploring remains that of the human imagination.'

LETTER FROM ALEX MACKENZIE
1408 I Street
Bellingham, WA 98225
August, 1983

'I've always found Darrell Schweitzer the least interesting and most annoying writer in your mag and have been dismayed at his malignant growth therein over the last year or two. I am greatly pleased to hear of the addition of Charles Platt. His interviews are always good, his letters insightful and he doesn't seem to expend every other breath in egomaniacal, vindictive snipery, like some people. I am tired of Schweitzer's endless canonization of fantasy, his I-Know-All-That-Is-True-And-Good attitude and his excessive letters, in which he seems to revel in telling us that those who disagree with him are low-level sub-morons.

'What really irritates me is his arrogant assumption that only people with a high-class literary background can even begin to understand what good reading is and can really appreciate "true" quality fantasy. He seems to think that SF fans have never heard of Moby Dick and that if they haven't steeped themselves in the classics they'll be totally unable to make distinctions in literary quality. SF fans read SF, he seems to say, because it's not Literature with a capital L, and they disdain fantasy because of its past associations with academia. This is silly. Every friend of mine who reads SF has very eclectic reading tastes in both fiction and nonfiction -- most people of above-average intelligence do. And I like to think that most SF fans are of above-average intelligence. We just don't care much for fantasy. I'm not sure why -- I can only speak for myself. I don't like it because my favorite stories are those which deal with present and future technologies and how people interact with them. I've always been fascinated by new gadgets and discoveries and the speculations around them. I'm also partial to future space travel, colonization, galactic empires, etc. Fantasy gives me none of that, so I don't read it.

'I also like a book whose author has a sense of humor (and that doesn't mean it has to be a comedy either) and most fantasy I've looked at seems to take itself too dead serious for my tastes, or what's worse, it's too damned boring. No thanks. This is why I grew tired of endless pages of Schweitzer going on and on with his fantasy reviews, comments and the like. I'm sure he'll go on, but I hope in future we'll see less of it.'

((I expect the interview with Darrell this issue will be a bitter pill to swallow. Cheer up. Part II of his interview is far superior, as he stops talking about himself and gets into more interesting subjects.))

LETTER FROM GEORGE R. SMITH
13224 South C Street
Tacoma, WA 98444
June, 1983

'I would like to find technical data on the parameters of laser launched spacecraft. Does anyone subscribing to SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW know where I could

find information on the size of the launching mirrors, the amount of energy it would take, the kind of technology involved and so on? Please contact me if anyone knows. Jerry Pournelle and Larry Niven have both written stories which involved this, both for interplanetary and interstellar craft.

'Having just got through with business, I want to comment on an aspect of THE MOTE IN GOD'S EYE that no one seems to have remarked. Has anyone else ever noticed that the Moties are Orientals, either Japanese or Chinese, as seen through an author's subconscious? The "unchanging half-smile," the severe overpopulation and even the smaller size are tip-offs. You even have the "they all look alike" bit. The emphasis on superior intelligence and technical ability combined with swarming hordes sounds like classic Fu Manchu and Yellow Peril. I've always thought that the worst examples of senseless overbreeding are in Hispanic countries such as Mexico. I would like to see a meeting between E. Hoffman Price and Jerry Pournelle. The difference in their views would make an interesting clash.

'Alexis S. Gilliland's "Rosinante" series is just exactly the kind of science fiction that first attracted me to the genre. It has an optimistic point of view, it creates a plausible and well extrapolated history and society, the science and engineering is inevitable without being banal and the characters are human. They are as good as Heinlein's early books, now classics and better than a lot of the SF that's floating around. I'm surprised, Geis, you didn't say more about them in SFR. A writer like Tom Disch is all right in his place but his deadly downbeat writing doesn't offer any hope for the future or any idea of how to get there.

'Gilliland even has Skashashism, a theology acceptable to robots and spacedwelling humans. Earlier SF usually dealt with religion, if at all, as hideous theocracies and science based trickery, ala IF THIS GOES ON, GATHER, DARKNESS, THE PRINCE IN WAITING and so on. With the decadence and falsity of secular humanism now obvious, whether liberalism or communism, honest-to-God religion has come back in an increasing number of serious and not so serious SF, such as THE SHADOW OF THE TORTURER and CESTUS DEI.'

((My problem with the Rosinante novels was that the good guys won out so easily all the time; there was no real suspense. The reader knew the outcome. Granted the happy ending for the heroes is always there in genre sf, there should be some greater tension and doubt created. Too, too much of the Rosinante novels were talk-talk in meetings, with the real action off stage.

((I've just received an advance copy of Alexis's newest novel, THE END OF THE EMPIRE, which is not a Rosinante novel. It's from Del Rey, $2.25, slated for December release. I had just completed pasting up The Archives, so this mention will substitute for a listing there.))

LETTER FROM JOHN BRUNNER

BRUNNER FACT & FICTION, LTD.
The Square House, Palmer St.
S. Petherton, Somerset
England TA13 5DB
11th August 1983

'Finding SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #48 on returning from Japan (by the way, a "Noise Level" report on Japlish will arrive under separate cover), I notice one comment -- in the Phil Dick argument, all of which saddens me very much -- that I want to make a quick response to.

'Charles Platt is wrong to dismiss rationality as boring. People who think that way have missed a trick. To quote Chad Mulligan of STAND ON ZANZIBAR (approximately and from memory): "The real world has one unique attribute. It, and only it, can take us totally by surprise."

'Compared to reality, other versions of the universe are dull.'

LETTER FROM ELTON T. ELLIOTT

1899 Weissner Drive NE
Salem, OR 97303
October, 1983

'Well, well, I see the 48th issue of SFR featured a letter from a Robert Collins. Amusing letter. It's interesting to note that Mr. Collins signs himself from Florida Atlantic University, the College of Humanities. He then proceeds to indulge in ad hominum reasoning and personal attacks---as I'm about to do. His letter is not surprising. In my experience I've found a high degree of ignorance and prejudice behind the ivory towers of academe. Mr. Collins' remarks show how well he fits the norm.

'Oh. Dick, the desire to get down in the mud and start slingin' is awful strong, but it's so unseemly. It's better left to obscure Florida "professors" from obscure Florida universities.

'However, Mr. Collins is theoretically in the teaching profession, so as part of his continuing education, edification and enlightenment I hereby provide a paragraph-by-paragraph grading of his letter in the fashion I would do it if he had submitted it in my class.

'First paragraph fine, but in the second you make a mistake. You use REG's analysis of Mr. Elliott's writing to make your own.

'In the third paragraph you say searching for definition has been "mostly abandoned by academics", but then in the fourth paragraph you go right on to blithely propose your own definition, even indulging in an attempt to define reality. What a concept.

'The next two paragraphs are best defined by your phrase "incremental and going nowhere.

'In the next to last paragraph you put words into the writer's mouth. Shame, shame. Maybe a refreshment course in Freshman Comp. is in order.

'The last paragraph is tepid and uninspired.

'Overall I give the letter an A in appearance, a C- in structure, and a D in logic.

'(The student doesn't have the talent to make a career out of writing, but is stodgy and non-threatening. Maybe a career as an obscure professor at an obscure Florida university would be in order.)

'Amusing, Dick, but it still feels like the old meat cleaver/flea act.'

THANKS TO:
BRUCE D. ARTHURS
F.M. BUSBY
ED ROM
MIKE GLICKSOHN
RICHARD A. FRANK
JOHN T. HARLEE
CHET TWAROG
RICH BROWN
STEVE GALLAGHER
DEAN R. LAMBE
HARRY WARNER, JR.
NORMAN KAGAN
DARRELL SCHWEITZER....
FOR WRITING.

SMALL PRESS NOTES

PKDS NEWSLETTER #1
A LETTER FROM PHILIP K. DICK

The Philip K. Dick Society has formed and issued a newsletter and a pamphlet. The Newsletter goes to Society members and is $5. per year. Address: PKDS, Box 611, Glen Ellen, CA 95442.

The Newsletter has news about the activities of the Phil Dick estate--collecting Dick ms., letters, etc., promoting literary interest in Dick... News of recent republications of Phil's novels, of bibliographies in progress, of adaptation to opera form of VALIS... A listing of media stories about Phil. Interesting quotes from Phil's interviews and close friends. Photos of Phil.

A LETTER FROM PHILIP K. DICK is a pamphlet issued by the PKDS. The letter was written February 1, 1960 to Eleanor Dimoff, then editor with Harcourt, Brance and Co., and revealingly discusses his non-sf novels and himself at some length. Some of those titles: A TIME FOR GEORGE STAVROS, BROKEN BUBBLE OF THISBE HOLT, IN MILTON LUMKY TERRITORY, and NICHOLAS AND THE HIGS.

This pamphlet comes with membership in the Society.

Note: Memebership is $9. to those overseas [airmail].

The package is well worth the cost if you're a Phil Dick enthusiast.

STRATEGY OF THE NEW LIBERTARIAN ALLIANCE #2, $2.95. 1982-3
P.O. Box K, Norwalk, CA 90650

Here is the place where hardcore libertarians come out to play... theory. Especially Samuel Edward Konkin III, whose lead article, "Agorism Contra Marxism" is a demolishment of marxist class struggle theory and a refinement of the essential libertarian view of class:

> 'Nearly all libertarians... accept that the State divides human society into two classes: those that gain by the existence of the State and those who lose.'

Sam and his fellow believers are purists---idealists---who will likely spend the rest of their lives disputing fine points of theoretical freedom and statism, endlessly boxed and vexed by subtle points of logic and impurities of thinking, endlessly arguing the "progress" of the "agorist" movement in the world... happy as clams.

These people write in a dense, quasi-sociologist argot and style that is characteristic of intellectuals and hair-splitters. They seem to be professors in drag, academics, living in an intellectual fantasy world, pretending a pure libertarian world could exist if only....

If only human nature were different, and if only our social instincts were different. But they're not different; mankind is instinctual and not a blank slate at birth subject to molding to a desired, perfect creature. Idealists can never accept that truth, and they always fail in their attempts to change mankind...whether the idealists are communists, socialists, liberals, conservatives or libertarians. Applied science has alone provided the surpluses of wealth which have allowed what "reforms" have occurred, a kind of fall-out from man's increasing technological ability to transform raw material into useable, enjoyable things.

Libertarians are in a double bind: they cannot convince mankind to change, and by their own philosophy they cannot force people to change. So they talk to each other.

WE HAVE A NERVOUS JOB
Poems by David R. Bunch
Available for $3. from Harry Bose, 576 38th Street, Astoria, OR 97103

An attractive 13-poem booklet whose theme is death, dying, killing and sweet entropy whose draught we all must take.

CLAUSTROPHOBIA #81 $1.50
Edited by Eric Geislinger
5047 SW 26th Dr.,
Portland, OR 97201

Well-printed, attractive, well-organized news and views about two basic subjects: space industrialization, and life-extension news and speculation.

The major article this issue is about the drug Dilantin, normally used to keep epilepsy under control. But there is evidence that it can also extend the lives of test animals. Alas, there is no data yet on whether it has--in 30 years--extended the lives of those epileptics who have taken it for long periods. The side effects and dangers of the drug, however, are harrowing.

There is a way of extending your life span that is simple and proven: starve yourself from childhood. Underfeeding of rats has extended their lives to the equivalent of 120 human years.

Forty years ago I read of an 18th Century Spaniard who from his early twenties limited himself to 10 oz. of food and 10 oz. of liquids per day. He lived to be 95 or so.

RICHARD E. GEIS

And I recall that old medical saying: "The thin rats bury the fat rats."

Of course you must underfeed yourself a balanced diet. And you must have W*I*L*L*P*O*W*E*R.

I am somewhat leery and skeptical of drugs that are supposed to do the job.

WEIRDBOOK 18 $5.00
Edited by W. Paul Ganley
Weirdbook Press, POB 149, Amherst Branch, Buffalo, NY 14226-0149.

Twelve stories by authors such as Darrell Schweitzer, J.N. Williamson, Brian Lumley, Gerald W. Page, Paul Collins...

Ten poems.

Some excellent artwork, especially the Fabian cover, but most of the interior illos are amateurish.

The fiction is all professional quality, I'd say. The Schweitzer has opening muscle. But so many of these are so predictable, so routine, so blah.... The weird story is mired in a rut so deep I'm surprised Paul and others bother to continue publishing all these clones, issue after issue after issue. But, then, he can't publish what he doesn't get, and the writers are the ones to blame, I suppose. Even when they strain and strive and come up with a clever or intriguing variation...the writing, more often than not, is pedestrian and unexciting.

Thus this lament of a bored and frustrated reader.

WIRETAPPING AND ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE - COMMISSION STUDIES $9.95

HOW TO GET ID IN CANADA $7.95
By Ronald George Eriksen 2

SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTIONS $4.95
By Erwin S.(Filthy Pierre) Strauss

VONU--THE SEARCH FOR PERSONAL FREEDOM
By Rayo. Edited by Jon Fisher

The four books above available from and published by Loompanics Unlimited, P.O. Box 1197, Port Townsend, WA 98368.

WIRETAPPING AND ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE is a report detailing the technology and techniques of bugging and tapping. Very informative, a bit frightening, and of value to professional writers in making their spy scenes authentic.

HOW TO GET ID IN CANADA is aimed at those who want or need to change identities. Tells how to get birth certificates, drivers licences, and other ID ---in names other than your own. Photos of Canadian ID are included.

This book, and others like it, are of value to the professional writer, especially those who write of intrigue, spies, conspiracy....

SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTIONS is well done and informative, written by a veteran of over 100 cons. Who, what, when, where, why... Maybe if I'd read a book like this when I was young I wouldn't dislike cons as much as I do now. Naw...

VONU is an exploration of the theory and practice of living free of State control and awareness... If They don't know you exist, or if it's too much trouble and expense to find you...you are in effect, free. Rayo liked to live in the wilderness, and his articles and essays are centered in that lifestyle. He didn't think it possible to make it in a city. Not his style.

Most people don't value that kind of total freedom---actually isolation---very highly. I'm of the Be Prepared variety: be aware, be prepared to cut and run [actually be willing to leave possessions if not money] if a supreme crisis or war is imminent, but in the meantime enjoy what you've got and the advantages of a city.

It's all a matter of basic character; you can or you can't. Seeking total personal freedom is a kind of idealistic, absolutist psychosis. The price is enormous and very, very few are willing to pay it. But it's out there--if you want it. Or, more exactly, it is in you if you need it.

NON-LITERARY INFLUENCES ON SCIENCE FICTION (AN ESSAY) By ALGIS Budrys
Drumm Booklet #9 $1.25
Chris Drumm, POB 445, Polk City, IA 50226.

This essay appeared in a severely edited form in SCIENCE FICTION DIALOGUES. This is its complete-as-written first-time publication.

A LARRY NIVEN CHECKLIST
Compiled by Chris Drumm $1.00
POB 445, Polk City, IA 50226

FOOTSTEPS Summer, 1983 Vol.1, No.1
Edited and published by Bill Munster, Box 63, Westkill, NY 12492

Billed as a non-profit quarterly, Bill wants $2.50 for a copy of this 16-page-plus-covers half-size, typeset kind-of folio. Stiff, high-quality paper, stiff, low-quality fiction of the extremely short persuasion. A couple poems. Some short reviews. Bill is a newcomer to fandom, witness his use of 'sci-fi.' Will someone trade with him (besides me, that is) and let him absorb the Rules?

COMICS INTERVIEW
Edited and published by David Anthony Kraft
Fictioneer Books Ltd.,
Suite 301,
234 Fifth Av., New York, NY 1001

David---a sf fan from way back, with a commercial/professional interest in comics, sent along the first five issues of COMICS INTERVIEW magazine. In the comics format, these are exactly what they promise: interviews with the writers, artists, letterers, colorists, editors, publishers of the comics industry. David's editorial dept. is titled "Up Front," and his fanzine [that's what this is, in essence] is an in-depth look at the personalities, the forces, the processes that create and publish comics. All kinds comics. With photos and artwork to show you what is being discussed. Letters from readers. Sixty-eight pages per issue. $1.75 per copy.

These are fascinating.

NEXUS #3 $1.75
BADGER #1 $1.75
Capital Publications
POB 908, Madison, WI 53701.

Both written by Mike Baron, NEXUS is drawn by Steve Rude, BADGER is drawn by Jeffrey Butler. Both are highly professional, both in the superhero tradition, with NEXUS in the future, BADGER present-day.

The color and printing are simply superb! Fine paper.

Capital seems to be doing well, with the new BADGER, and still another new one scheduled: WHISPER.

I like these; the action, the pace, the vividness, the simple morality, the good guys vs. baddies... Would people buy written fiction this violent and fast-paced and simple-minded? They used to, but is that audience still out there? Or is the readership for that fiction now only a viewership?

NOISE LEVEL

a column

john brunner

JAPLISH AND/OR JANGLISH --
THEY SAY BOTH AND MEAN NEITHER

She was tiny and, though not facially beautiful, exquisite: the epitome of Japanese girlhood, with a doll-like fragility, a perfect complexion, graceful movements and long dark hair. She was also brilliant; aged about nineteen and still at college, she was acting as interpreter for the Soviet delegate at the First Hiroshima Conference of Asian Writers, and her Russian (which she owes to having spent three or four weeks in Moscow with her parents when she was a child) was discernibly fluent even to me, who sat next to her once during the proceedings. I speak no Russian worth mentioning, but I noted the lack of ums and ers.

However on the waistband of the tight pink jeans she wore throughout the conference, which grew distinctly grubby by the final day, was sewn a label saying:

ADMONITION
As it's in a song
EVEN IF I'M IN RAGS
I AM STILL FINE
Groovy Division

Are you acquainted with Japlish, or as it's often termed Janglish? No? Then look forward to a brief introduction.

Some background first. The phone went, around the end of June when I was struggling with my next SF novel (title: CONTINUUM; short but powerful; look out for it some time around the end of 1984; end of commercial break), and a polite female voice inquired whether I'd like to go to Japan as a delegate for the First Hiroshima Conference of Asian Writers. When I got my breath back I said, approximately, wild horses wouldn't stop me and what do I have to do?

So she told me and I made my first visit to Japan. I suspect you sophisticated Americans don't realize how much further away in all respects Japan is from Europe than it is from your patch of the world; lots of you get there one way or another, often free of charge thanks to military service. But for me this was an Event with a capital E, and I might never get another chance.

I've reported elsewhere (in CND's magazine SANITY, from 11 Goodwin Street, London N 4, and the newsletter of BAND, Book Action for Nuclear Disarmament) about my experiences during the two peace conferences which were the ostensible reason for my visit. This piece is about one very special subject. Ever seen a guy wearing a bright yellow T-shirt with lettering in acid green reading DAZZING QUEEN? I saw him in the Peace Park at Nagasaki, after a trip on the so-called "bullet train" -- the shinkansen -- from whose windows I noticed a hotel called PARK IN NAPOLEON. I won't bother you (much) with SWELLDOM WELLCOME PASSION DISCO because it's too far away to drop in for an evening of jounce and bounce, nor with CUT HOUSE MORE, a parallel operation to BAR BER KINPARI, I imagine; nor with THINK HOUSE and HOBBY LIFE SOHP COSMO FRONTIER; nor with the ARARM I found in my room at Tokyo's Hotel Park Side nor the PRICE RIST I spotted in a restaurant -- not the one, as it happened, which was offering BRAISAD SALMON SEWED WITH SPINACH, SOLE MOSS CREME SAUCE, SOUTEED SCALLOPS NICE STYLE, STEEK, and your choice of spaghetti NAPORITAN or PESCATOLE.

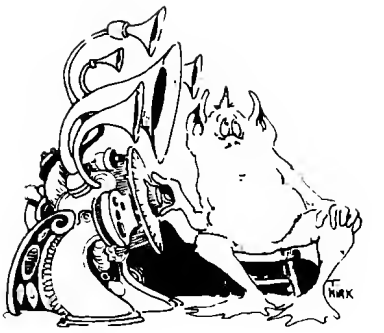
I shall also skip the one whose menu offers ROLL PAIN, and the one in Nagasaki with a BAR ROUNGE. I shall omit reference to the motorboat I saw on a trailer out of the train window, which was charmingly called POWER ELITE. No more will I make you yawn over the news that Nagasaki is now described in its tourist literature as NAPORI IN ORIENT. Nor shall I describe the car bearing a sticker reading VIVA CUTE. No, such is not my intention.

I'm going to tell you about T-shirts and carrier bags ...

My report to the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament concerning my trip is called BLACK JUMP, WHITE MESSAGE, for the good and sufficient reason that those were the slogans on the first two carrier bags I saw when I arrived. The next one, however, told me:

The eyes catch
the hearts of people.
So people fall
in love easily.

At which point I confess I started to say: Hmmm?



And then I began to read the T-shirts ...

All right: You can see the purpose of an embroidered design on a blouse worn by a girl of college age, one side showing two people on horseback and the other a silhouette of some kind of dwelling, captioned YOUR-HORSE YOUR-HOUSE. But what is one to make of the following?

HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD
BLINDING FASHION
CAREER LYCEE
FIFTH AVENUE

-- or

INDIVIDUALLY BASIC

-- or

COW
FRONTIER SPIRIT

-- or

ATLANTI COCEAN

-- or

ITALIAN MOPED

-- or

tiny SC
Ivy Spirit forever
This is my individual
Yokohama

-- or (this on a 3-year-old child)

DREAM OF LILLIPUTIAN
· It's a fine day
we feel well very much

-- or (best of all, neatly printed on a knit shirt, obviously expensive, shining white with hard-edged black lettering, seen at Fukuoka Airport on leaving Nagasaki)

Spécial
Salon
Mode
Enfantine
VIE SEXUELLE
LES 5 ERREURS CAPITALES
Le 1e numéro de
depeche mode
grand public est sorti!

-- which translates approximately as: "Special salon chidren's style" (presumably, the name of

the shop, although the wearer was in her twenties) "Sex life, the 5 worst mistakes. The first number of Depeche Mode" (title of a magazine) "for general sale is out now!"

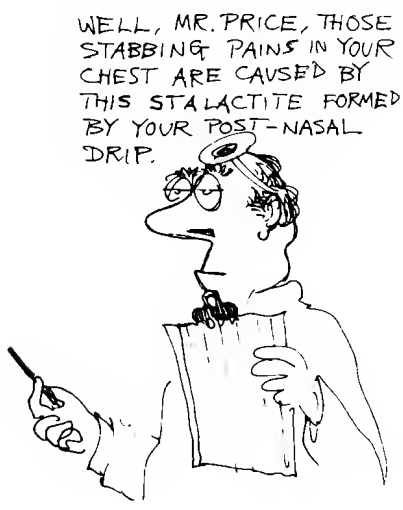
Carolyn Forche', the American poet, and I spent a long time staring at that one, and I'm afraid we made the young lady somewhat uncomfortable -- nearly as uncomfortable as the prospective visitor for whom I'm reserving a cake of COW BEAUTY SOAP will be when she arrives and finds it on the handbasin next to our guestroom ...

As one of the records which are our slender legacy from that witty and much-lamented musical joker Gerard Hoffnung, he explains the nature of modern German music, emphasizing that "in Chairmany ve make it ozzer!" I, having today replied to a German SF fan who wrote to me hoping he might become an autogram, do hereby testify that in Japan they do the same, only worse. Trying to make sense of the slogans they put on their T-shirts is a subject for an entire doctoral thesis, or maybe several.

Well, now I have to go and cook the dinner. Thanks for letting me share my problem with you. The headache I had when I started has considerably improved.

But I have a horrible suspicion it will come back next time I look at my notes about the trip ...

JOHN BRUNNER WILL BE RECORDING THIS AND FUTURE "NOISE LEVEL" COLUMNS FOR BROADCAST OVER KPFK IN LOS ANGELES.



THE CRUCIBLE OF TIME By John Brunner
DEL REY, $12.95, September 1983.

In many ways this new epic sf novel by John Brunner is a daring and risky effort, for him and for Del Rey.

It tells the thousands-of-years story of an alien race on an alien planet from a time of rudimentary civilization when the scientific approach to their world emerged from superstition and ignorance, to a Medieval-type of culture, to early industrial revolution, to the conquest of space.

Their civilizations rise and collapse under an ice age, and as a result of a great thaw. Another world catastrophe---the impact of a giant meteorite---sets them back again.

But through it all a small cult of dedicated scientists preserves and expands knowledge, becomes aware of an approaching doom for their solar system as it speeds toward a dense cluster of stars.

There are seven sections in this remarkable novel, each detailing a short period of an era, showing the heroes and heroines of this race.

There are cultural problems...as a social movement opposed to science flourishes, and a self-indulgent live fast, enjoy, let the future take care of itself philosophy hinders the growing world-wide drive to save the species from ultimate extinction. And ever-present is the physiological problem of low, improper nutrition which sends the minds of any of this race into a dreamstate of hallucination and unreality.

There are enduring fascinations for the reader: the increasing use by this species of other creatures for tasks we assign to machines. They develop biological pumps, radios, telegraphs, recorders, lights, houses, transport... Their ships are huge sea creatures tamed and adapted for passengers and cargo. Even their spacecraft are primarily organic and living.

Ah, but the ultimate fascination is the aliens themselves. Are they (as I thought at first) bipedal lobsters? Are they a species of birds? Are they spiders? Are they beetles?

There are clues; there are references to claws and mandibles, mantles, tubules, ichor...to the need of interior pressure, to the smells emitted to show and betray emotions. And the aliens change from hardbacks to creatures of muscles and tubules, more flexible, more survivable. And they reproduce by "budding".

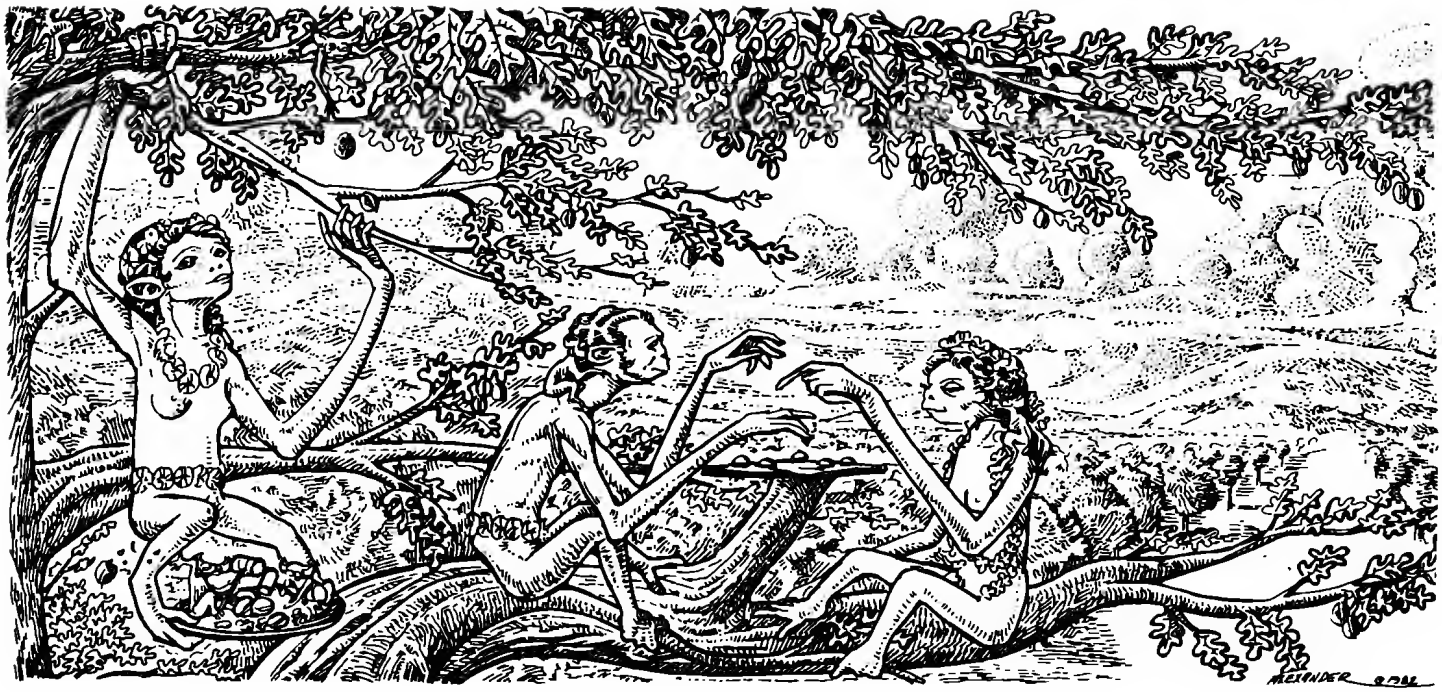
This is a daring, risky novel because these aliens are so different, so unhuman, that the question arises---will readers be repelled? Will they identify and sypathize with these creatures?

Fortunately, John has made the aliens' minds human. Their conflicts and moralities and tribalisms and nations are very similar to human. Their ways of thinking are so human as to be off-putting at times, as when he uses such phrases as "prong of the moment decision..." "...on the other claw..." "a cold-ichored" decision.

And most of the time the reader is aware that John Brunner is talking about human foibles, flaws, social problems, psychology.

So this extraordinary novel is challenging to the sf reader..and a marvel. It cannot be skimmed---there is too much information, too much entrancing detail to be missed, to be absorbed. It compells you to pay attention. It is pure science fiction.

----RICHARD E. GEIS



DARRELL SCHWEITZER

INTERVIEWED BY NEAL WILGUS

SFR: Why was WE ARE ALL LEGENDS marketed by Starblaze as a novel when in fact it's a collection of short stories? Even though the stories dovetail into an overall narrative -- the adventures of Julian the Apostate -- you wouldn't seriously maintain that the book is a novel, would you?

SCHWEITZER: The "novel" business was Hank Stine's idea. You'll notice it's contradicted by de Camp in the Introduction. No, I would not maintain that it is a novel. It is a collection of related stories. It has more continuity than say, the standard collection of Northwest Smith stories, or even one of the chronologically arranged Conan volumes, because it has a definite progression from beginning to end. But to be honest with you, I had serious doubts about in what order some of the stories should be placed. The first and last are obvious, and "The Lady of the Fountain", "The Veiled Pool of Mistorak," and "The One Who Spoke with the Owls" form a clear progression. (Those 3 predate the others by at least 2 years. When they were written the series was not envisioned as a book. When "The Lady of the Fountain" was written no series was envisioned, except facetiously. I wrote a pseudo-scholarly "Note on the Julian Cycle" about that time -- late 1973. It jes' growed.) (I am addicted to parenthetical asides, which Samuel R. Delany has made respectable in his critical writings.) "Into the Dark Land" is obviously very late in the progression, but "The Riddle of the Horn" is just vaguely somewhere in the middle. The series was not written in the order presented in the book, as you doubtless have perceived by now. (I'll take this opportunity to note, though, that the alleged publication of "A Fabulous Formless Darkness" in 1970, as listed on the copyright page, is a typo. Should be 1980.)

No, it isn't a novel. It is a story cycle, which I think is an art form as distinct as a novel. As I continued writing the stories I began to see the overall structure of it, and that it was pointing toward a conclusion. But it reached its conclusion before I had written some of the middle episodes. (The last one written is "The Unknown God Cried Out.")

You must consider that Donning is taking a considerable risk publishing an unorthodox book of stories by a little-known writer with no novels in print. I am happy to say that it seems to be doing moderately well, at least as well as most of the other Starblaze books published at the same time. I am grateful to Hank Stine for having gone out on a limb for me, and if he thinks it best to make the thing look superficially like a novel, I will trust his judgment.

SFR: Taras Wolansky made a similar comment about the story-cycle/novel in a footnote to my review of LEGENDS in a recent issue of ASTERISKS, the MenSFan zine he edits. Wolansky thinks the form is unique to SF/Fantasy and I suppose he's right (with a few exceptions such as Sherwood Anderson's WINESBURG, OHIO). Would you go along with calling such creatures the "noveloid?"

SCHWEITZER: Well, if Conan Doyle had only written one volume of Sherlock Holmes, beginning with an "origin" story and ending at Reichenbach Falls, what would you call that? I don't think the story-cycle-as-book is unique to SF. We can see more of it in SF of late with the decline of serial markets. Many writers now cobble novels together out of magazine stories, rather than write them whole, and serializing them. The editors of THE SCIENCE FICTION ENCYCLOPEDIA use the very convenient term, "fix-up," which they attribute to A.E. van Vogt.

Such things are so expected these days that LEGENDS is being widely reviewed as a novel, and sometimes criticized because I did not do enough rewriting to make it a true novel. Well, I did almost no rewriting, because it isn't a novel, except by commercial convenience. If I may coin a term, it is a "non-fix-up." Basically what we have here is a series of stories about the same character which have a definite beginning, an almost definite ending and a roughly chronological middle.

This is a more limited form than a series like Tarzan (or any pulp character for that matter), in which the character doesn't develop. Julian is not the same at the end of each story, let alone several stories down the line. (In modern terms, a story is defined in terms of character development. Many pulp stories would not be considered stories at all by modern editors.) The result of this is that the stories must either get redundant, or the character will develop away from the condition which generates the tension for the series. In either case it's best to quit while you are ahead. If I ever do more, it will be a sequel to the whole work, and it will probably be a novel which will resolve everything, if that is possible. I will not do two sequels. God save me from the Curse of Fantasy Trilogies ....

Other story cycles: Well, there's THE DUBLINERS which many people see as a single work. THE MARTIAN CHRONICLES, of course, which is mostly not series-by-character. You could argue that LE MORTE D'ARTHUR is a colossal fix-up.

Actually the confusion arises over how fixed-up a book is. Mine does not attempt to be a novel. David Bunch's MODERAN does. (At least Bunch says so, and I guess he should know.)

SFR: In my ASTERISKS review of LEGENDS I expressed the opinion that the Julian stories were pretty weak on plot and would "bounce instantly" from ISAAC ASIMOV'S and the other pro SF magazines for that reason. Is this an accurate assessment in your view?

SCHWEITZER: A couple of the stories did bounce from ASIMOV'S ADVENTURE. I don't think it was for reasons of plot. George Scithers has never been a big fan of my fiction. This is because he has very definite ideas about fiction and doesn't show favoritism to anyone. He likes fiction to be dramatic, but clever and at the core, rational. He is not into mysticism, dream narratives, allegory or religious despair. I wouldn't expect him to buy a Julian story any more than I'd expect him to buy something from Charles Williams, were he reincarnated and writing sword and sorcery. The Julian stories are a-rational. They don't work from problem to solution in a clearcut way. The sort of fantasy George likes is either the rational/game sort, such as was published in UNKNOWN, or the outright fanciful like Dunsany's early stories, Davidson's Peregrine series, etc.

As for the implication that these stories, in essence squeaked by in the semi-prozines where the plotting standards are less stringent well, I should point out that there were no newsstand magazines which published this sort of thing at the time I was writing the series. Yeah, there was Ted White's FANTASTIC which did not answer mail and could not be dealt with. That doesn't count. There were occasional professional anthologies which could take maybe two stories a year. I got into two volumes of Offutt's SWORDS AGAINST DARKNESS. In one case Offutt wanted the story so badly he (as he says in his introduction) bought it out of his own pocket when the budget had run out. I sold to both of the anthologies Jerry Page was doing at the time, HEROIC FANTASY and THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR. Only three appeared in VOID. Three more (actually five, since one was three run together) appeared in Paul Collins' hardcover anthologies.

There's a curious double standard: If you publish a thousand copies of a magazine, that's semi-professional. A thousand copies of a hardcover is fully professional. Anyway, I'm not at all worried about the sales record of the Julian stories. Consider further that I sold the book to two different publishers (this was originally to be a Borgo Press book, but they stopped doing fiction), both of whom were willing to take the considerable risk of publishing a book of stories, not a novel, by a virtual unknown. (One publisher wouldn't even read it for that reason.)

Actually, what's haunted me ever since is the thought that the Julian stories are the most commercial things I have ever done, and nothing else will sell quite as easily.

I'm not going to argue with you on your opinion of the book. What you have said in your review, you have said. But I believe in plot. Maybe we define it differently. I believe a story should have a sound and logical reason for what happens in it, even if that is dream logic in some cases. I think the stories are plotted. Some of them are almost labyrinthine.

I go along with the modern editors who define plot in terms of character development. The crucial moment comes in any of the more complicated Julian stories, when the character has learned something which changes his outlook, and he decides what to do as a result. Keeping that in mind you can outline and diagram virtually any of the stories according to any of the classical plot skeletons. You know: hook; conflict; rising tension; crisis; resolution. I could pick an example ("The Hag" or "Divers Hands" would be particularly easy, they being the most plotty of the batch) and demonstrate this in incredible detail but that would be too narcissistic and I don't think Geis would stand for it.

SFR: What prompted you to write on a medieval theme -- or at least use that setting? Is this an area of special interest to you?

SCHWEITZER: It might be that I have a 13th Century mind. Medieval romance literature appeals to me greatly. It can be aesthetically beautiful, humanly touching and at the same time handle the symbolic elements in such a way that they don't seem heavy handed but dovetail nicely into the narrative. This gives the overall impression that the fantastic goings-on mean something in a moral or spiritual sense. SIR GAWAIN AND THE GREEN KNIGHT (I slightly prefer the Roger Loomis transla-* tion but Tolkein's is also pretty good) is more an example of what I mean than say, THE ROMANCE OF THE ROSE which is pure allegory to the exclusion of narrative elements. I am not a fan of EVERYMAN or PILGRIM'S PROGRESS. (Though I do admire THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR.) Or Cretien de' Troyes' PERCEVAL. These give you a sense of being around the backstage of reality and seeing how the scenery has been put up. Medieval writers tended to see things in symbolic terms. Life was a pilgrimage into the next world. (I use this image very specifically in the scene between Julian and the church muralist.) Therefore, in Julian's case, he has strayed from the path of his journey and become stuck in a swamp of moral ambiguity. Or as Dante put it:

> "In the middle of the journey of our life,
> I came to myself in a dark wood,
> where the straight way was lost."

Subsequent adventures are rather different, however. There are fewer 13th Century Italians in my book.

SFR: How about the Christian theme in LEGENDS? Is this just local color or is LEGENDS an example of theological fantasy?

SCHWEITZER: Yes. Seriously, you can't separate the two aspects. I am opposed to fake medievalism which consists of lots of poorly-described castles, a few thees and thous and the characters all being Lords and Ladies who seem to exist in a standard-issue culture which has no particular values or outlook.

If you're going to write about medieval Christendom, why the characters are mostly going to think and act and envision their world like medieval Christians. This seems to come as a surprise to many would-be fantasy writers. One thing I find most unsatisfactory about a lot of the current, mass-produced fantasy is that the characters are not discernably products of their society. They don't seem to be instilled with any system of belief unique to their culture and time period. I will grant Robert Howard a plus in that Conan the Barbarian to some extent did. Crom gave a man his native intelligence and strength and didn't like crybabies. This shaped Conan's rather grim view of things. A very important part of any fiction, particularly any fiction set away from the here and now, is assuming the perspective of the characters.

At the same time, you don't just put a story in a given setting frivolously. If I had not been interested in writing Christian theological fantasy, I would not have used the medieval setting. These stories would not have worked in Babylon, for example. Since they are about moral disintegration and specifically the loss of ideals, and the chivalric code is being used as the central metaphor, they also wouldn't have worked in the "Middle Ages" of Charles Martel's Gaul. It's a mistake to think of the Middle Ages as a uniform period. The time of Martel (700s) is not that of William the Conquerer, and neither are the times of Chaucer. It's difficult to pin a historical date on Julian, though he seems to have participated in the conquest of Jerusalem and attendant slaughter. (The Crusaders put the 50,000 inhabitants of the city, Christian, Moslem and Jew alike, to the sword. Later when the Saracens retook the place, they did nothing of the sort. But they never got worked up to the fever pitch of hysteria that the Christians did at the outset. All of the glory of God, you understand ...) The setting is the High Middle Ages of Romance rather than history. It has much more to do with medieval literature. John Maundeville may be assumed to have been an accurate reporter. King Arthur lived sometime in the dim past. Merlin lived, and before he did any of the deeds for which he became famous, performed a few odds and ends, like binding the Ice and Fire Kings. Dunsany observed that the intrusion of magic into THE CHRONICLES OF RODRIGUEZ tended to blur the dates until he could be no more specific than "the Golden Age of Spain." Similarly, I can be no more specific than the Middle Ages of Romance, but it seems to be a very late and decadent romance which has rotted around the edges.

But yes, it is a real live theological fantasy. Not a preachment. Editors are very leery of stories with Christian elements because they expect preachments and don't know what to make of them when they're not preachy. This is probably why there is so little non-preachy fantasy around that uses Christian elements.

Of course, it all goes back to my having a 13th Century mind.

SFR: If LEGENDS is "real live theological fantasy" why are God and the devil given so little attention? It seemed to me that Julian wasn't much of a Christian or he would have made a greater effort to "repent." Of course, that would have killed the series, I suppose ...

SCHWEITZER: You're looking for one of those morality plays in which God and the devil and Good Deeds and Avarice and Infectious Dandruff strut about and make ponderous pronouncements. No, it is a theological fantasy because it turns on religious concerns. Religious experience happens within the individual. If you have God and the devil on every page, there isn't much drama. The reader wonders why they have nothing better to do with their time.

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*Emphatic footnote: I mean the verse translation in MEDIEVAL ENGLISH VERSE & PROSE, ed. Loomis & Rudolph Willard (Appleton-Century Crofts), not the prose version in the Modern Library MEDIEVAL ROMANCES. Prose versions of poems tend to be horrid. They lose most of the poetry, if that is any surprise.

The vital part of any religion is not the precise nature of God or how many angels can dance on the head of a pin* but where people fit into all this.

Why didn't Julian "repent?" Well, Kardo Katha thought that would be a good idea. But Julian saw the paradox of his existence. He agreed to take the hag maiden's place before the devil out of pity. This was the only purely chivalric thing he ever did. Thus, by being a true knight, he is damned. The devil's prediction that Julian will come to him in his own way is of course true. From this point on, Julian can only fall away from his ideals. Everybody else -- the knight who meets him in the mosque, with the Muslim baby spitted on his spear, for instance -- never thought any of this through.

I understand there was once a would-be saint who out of pity, prayed that he might suffer all the torments of the damned, that they might go free. God took a rather dim view of the idea.

SFR: Do you anticipate extrapolating your 13th Century mind into the future the way Asimov, for instance, extrapolated the Roman Empire into the Foundation series?

SCHWEITZER: In the sense of doing a costume-historical story set in the future? No. That usually makes for cheap science fiction. If I'm going to write about the future (and I have on occasion) I'll come up with something more original. It is a weakness of the Foundation Trilogy that it follows Roman history so closely. The strength of it is the idea of psychohistory -- the idea that the vast stream of human experience which is larger than any individual can be scientifically understood and perhaps controlled. That is a magnificent vision. But the repetition of Gibbon is less impressive. If you're going to do a future history, you can learn from the history of the past. You can learn how things work. Then you have to come up with an imaginary drama which is as good a story as real history. The battle of Thermopylae would be magnificent heroic fiction if it hadn't happened. Asimov's perception, new to science fiction, I think, that the future will be perceived in terms of a long historical process, is a major insight. Too bad his invention didn't keep pace with it.

SFR: How can Starblaze afford to charge only $4.95 for LEGENDS, complete with wrap-around color cover and all those black-n-white interiors by Fabian? Will there be a mass-market reprint of LEGENDS any time soon?

SCHWEITZER: I hope this won't put a crimp on Steve's career if I mention that he comes cheaper than, say, N.C. Wyeth, Leo and Dianne Dillon or Michaelangelo ... No, the first thing I should emphasize is that Fabian was my choice to illustrate the book. Now, I learn that he will illustrate all six of my Starblaze books. I can't say I am disappointed, although this isn't what I had in mind at first. Stine seems to think that it will help sales to have the books look somewhat alike (though not matching in basic color or title lettering -- we don't want them to look identical), and he is very shrewd about this sort of thing.

Apparently, Starblaze pays a reasonable rate for artwork (I don't know how much) and gives the artists a considerable amount of freedom. They must do something right, to get all those artists to do covers for them.

No mass-market edition has been sold yet. I'm sure there will be one, but this book will probably not be the first of my Starblaze titles to have one. Probably THE SHATTERED GODDESS will. It's a novel, and less of a risk for a mass-market publisher.

Once I became a Starblaze author, I began to take special note of how their books did once mass-marketed. The two that were sold to Dell, SOME WILL NOT DIE by Budrys and ANOTHER FINE MYTH by Asprin, both had their mass-market editions, which sold umpteen copies and vanished. Mass market paperbacks tend to come out one month and then they are gone, like magazines. The Starblaze editions of those two titles (also of Bradley's THE RUINS OF ISIS, which was reprinted by Ace) are still in print. I like the prospect of having my books around forever, even if at a low volume.

As for the price, well, inflation is forcing them to $5.95 soon, but the idea, as I understand it, is to keep the prices within a few dollars of the cost of a mass-market edition, and offer a vastly superior package, so it will look like an obvious bargain and sell copies. This must be working because there was a Starblaze book on the LOCUS bestseller list every month in 1981.

SFR: If the modern editorial view of plot emphasizes character development, as you say, what is your reaction to Dick Geis' call for less internal emphasis and almost exclusive concentration on external action? His idea is that fiction writers will be forced to this to compete with action-filled movies and TV stories, but it sounds rather dismal to me. Can you show character development in an action-only story? Do you foresee an about-face like this coming up?

SCHWEITZER: Most How-to-Write books you'll encounter, including my own, ON WRITING SF: THE EDITORS STRIKE BACK (with George Scithers and John M. Ford, Owlswick Press) will tell you, however they phrase it, that a story tells how a character got from condition A to condition B, in the process learning, changing, perceiving or doing something beyond the capacities of a cigar store Indian. Any story that isn't just a bunch of pointless action has to, to some extent, define itself in terms of character change. Otherwise it isn't a story. It's an anecdote. As modern science fiction continues to shed its pulp character,

*Which is a problem in physics. If angels are immaterial, then an infinite number can occupy the same space at the same time, and there is no housing shortage in Heaven. But if they have mass (not necessarily Solemn High Mass either) then if you put too many on the head of the pin, there will be a fusion explosion. When angels blow up they release in addition to lots of feathers, sub-atomic particles of grace called "holyons." Would I lie to you?

there is more emphasis on this. George used to insist that IASFM was unusual in that it demanded novel quality characterization in a short story. But I don't think that's very unusual. (George, being a full time editor, seldom had time to read the competition.) A story, any story, has to be about people doing something which is important to them, and the outcome of it has to also be important. The plot is the mechanism by which this development takes place. I am not saying that the only real stories are formless things about people who sit around and brood about the Meaning of it All. (How silly; if you want to know the Meaning of Life, send me a quarter and a self-addressed postcard and I'll tell you. Or a #10 envelope and I'll send you the printed version.) But a story isn't just descriptions of physical action either. You know that the story has stopped when this thing which is so important to the character has come to some resolution. Ideally, a story should be about the most important thing that ever happens in the protagonist's life.

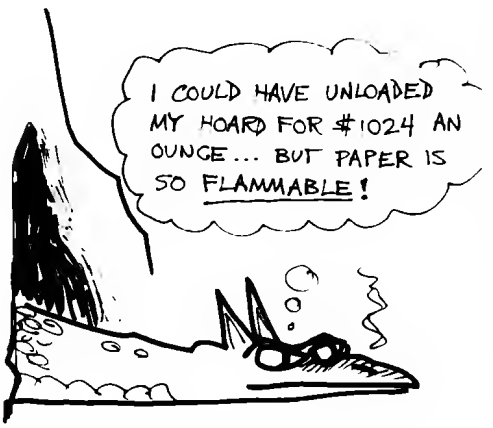
Dick Geis is simply wrong. I went into this in detail in a letter to SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW recently. I think there is a substantial portion of the readership which reads books because television can't provide what they are looking for. I watch virtually no television. (The only series I watch regularly is RIPPING YARNS. I have not watched regular network programming much since my early teens.) If the sort of books I like were replaced by the sort Geis is calling for, I would get all my reading matter from libraries and used book shops.

And I really, really doubt that the sort of people who bought enough copies of the COLLECTED STORIES OF JOHN CHEEVER to put it on the NY TIMES bestseller list will spring for prose television.

At the same time, the sort of pretentious obscurantism which prevails in the little literary magazines (and keeps them little) and which was tried unsuccessfully in SF during the New Wave Era isn't what the readers want either, but there's more to "serious" writing than that. I wonder where MOBY DICK (which I have read four times and would go back to again before turning to, say, STARSKY & HUTCH or the novelistic equivalent thereof) fits into Dick's scheme.

SFR: In your Borgo Press booklet CONAN'S WORLD you comment in passing that WEIRD TALES gave its writers more freedom than the other pulp magazines of its day. Couldn't we expand on that and say that SF/fantasy in general gives writers more leeway? Isn't it inherent in the field -- which is, after all, speculative and mind expanding when it's done right?

SCHWEITZER: Would you say that a science fiction anthology edited by Roger Elwood gave a writer more freedom than a line of mainstream books edited by say, Maxwell Perkins? No, the point about WEIRD TALES was that it was the most "literary" of the pulps, in the sense that it would tolerate far more sophisticated writing than say, the McFadden GHOST STORIES, about which Howard commented that if you wanted to write for a McFadden magazine, any sort of literary background was a liability. WEIRD TALES published a lot of formula fiction but that was because many writers found it easier to churn out large quantities of stories with the use of formulas. But the magazine itself had no formula. What Howard particularly liked about it was it didn't dictate what sort of people the heroes had to be. In WEIRD TALES a writer could get away with a protagonist who might not be entirely virtuous, or might even be (like Conan) downright amoral. Many pulp magazines insisted that heroes be 100% All American Pure and that virtue triumph in the end. Also, many pulp magazines wanted stories which contained nothing but action. WEIRD TALES simply had a wider range of sensibilities. Something like Clark Ashton Smith's "Xeethra" or "Sadastor," or Lovecraft's "The Strange High House in the Mist" probably would have been completely incomprehensible to the readers of most other pulp magazines.



The question of whether or not mainstream fiction is more or less restrictive than fantastic fiction is a complicated one. John Campbell used to insist that mainstream fiction was a minor subset of science fiction, in that science fiction encompasses all that ever was or could be from the creation of the universe to its demise, while mainstream fiction is like a single hairbreadth line on this vast spectrum. Samuel Delany's analogy is, roughly, "Why should I play only two notes when I have discovered the whole scale?"

The functions of the two sorts of writing are different. There are a lot of SF fans who gleefully claim that "mainstream" is obsolete and will die out. This is ignorant bullshit. If you want to write about, for example, what it means to love someone, and why this relationship may come apart despite the wishes of the people involved -- and this is a perfectly valid subject for a novel -- it isn't necessary to do that in science fiction. In fact, if that is what the book is really about, the science-fictional trappings are probably a hindrance.

"Mainstream" actually is a misleading term. Most of the world's literature has been fantasy and probably always will be probably because of the natural human tendency for readers to want to read about something which is unusual rather than something which is familiar. "Mainstream" in English starts with Chaucer as far as I can tell. The idea of writing about everyday people in everyday situations (as in, particularly, the WIFE OF BATH's prologue) rather than legendary knights on supernatural/allegorical quests, was probably a startling innovation. (In formal literature anyway. I suspect that the popular, oral literature of the day had a lot of it. Then again, the literary snobs of the day, who "knew" that courtly romance was the only "real" literature, probably thought Richard II had no couth for liking that sort of stuff.) It hasn't survived all this time through academic pressure. The extreme predominance of realistic fiction in this country between about 1920 and 1960 is just a fluke, unique to the time and place and culture, but both types of writing are perfectly valid. The amount of freedom available depends on the particular circumstances of publication. In general, you have to admit that until comparatively recently, there were vast areas which a writer couldn't even touch in science fiction.

If you're talking about publishing circumstances right now in America, sure science fiction provides far more freedom and a lot more opportunites for new writers. But this is only a matter of extra-literary factors, like economics, the collapse of the fiction magazine, etc. It has nothing to do with the potential of a literary form. Back in the 1950s, when STORY magazine was still being published, and there were a lot of series anthologies like NEW WORLD WRITING, DISCOVERY, etc., conditions in the mainstream were a lot better. If you were asking this question about 1959, it would be nonsense. Science fiction was moribund and looked like it was dying. Donald Westlake reportedly quit science fiction about this time because he found it too hidebound and conservative.

END OF PART ONE

BAD WRITING: EXAMPLE #1

'When Ah Ching turned the corner and entered Ross Alley, his heart began to beat uncomfortably fast within his breast.'

CHINATOWN CHANCE By Tom Cutter (Robert J. Randisi). Tracker #4. Avon, $2.25, October, 1983.

Where else would it beat, for Christ's sake? [And the above is the first sentence of the Prologue.]

THE CRANIUM VAT

Footsteps patter in
Hidden corridors
Cobwebs drip saliva into
Animate recessions
Stars shine on a depilated
Cranium
The goblin tower spews
Forth virgins prepared
For the feast
Awesome rippling globes
Of flesh
Penetrate
A dank alley
Smelly drunks disturb
Rows of computer banks
While
Minds of infinite convolutions
Pleasure craft of the soul
Sink slowly into the mire
Of a ghost town
Spinning tumbleweeds intersect
Two cosmic axehandles grinding
Mounds of silly putty
Into intergalactic beacons
For the descendants of
Diaspar (diaspora) (dispeptic)
(Sporatic)
(Twong twong)
Oh how the Chinese
Love to carry
Manure up the hill
For their vats of
Rotted cheese

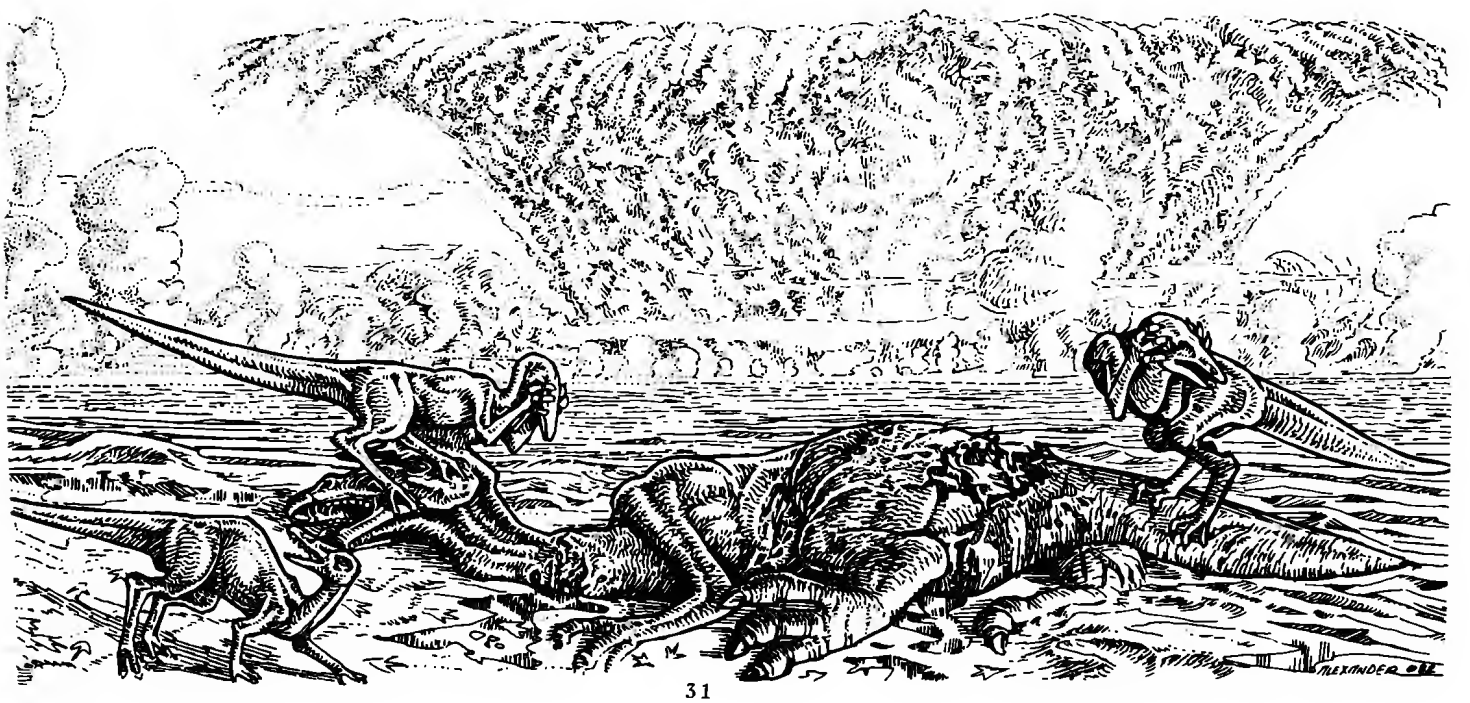
---BLAKE SOUTHFORK

BITTERSWEET LOVE
OR
ONE MAN'S AFFAIR WITH LEMONS

The lemon does not
Return affection easily
It is juicy
But very bitter
The scene opens:
I have brought the lemon home
To my apartment
Then
Deftly removing the outer skin
My tongue making short quick
Movements in anticipation
I ply it with a douse or
Two of vodka
All the while caressing
Its roundness
Then softly
My tongue begins to
Stroke the outer surface
Slowly probing past the bitter area
Then faster and faster
Until it begins to flick
The very center
Releasing a torrent
Of bitter juices

A lemon does not
Return affection easily

---BLAKE SOUTHFORK



and then i saw...

BLADE RUNNER (R)

is a marvel! Set forty years in the future, in Los Angeles, it tells of a man assigned to legally kill androids-gone-wrong. They're called Replicants. They can only live four years and the four he's looking for are angry at their fate and don't mind killing real humans.

It's a private-eye (voice-over) told story, and Harrison Ford does a good job as the hunter, called a Blade Runner.

But the real star of this film is the millieu: the marvelously detailed mixture of high-tech and degradation, of huge, exotic future buildings looming over the remnants of present-day L.A., of a cultural mix involving asians and occidents, and of future styles in dress, bottles, glasses, beds...

Everything seems to have been thought out, extrapolated, created, to fill the background and all the crevices in the sets of this movie to make this future real!

After a while you begin to pay more attention to the activity, the things in the background, than to the well-done but somewhat routine plot and action.

The low key lighting, the exquisite visual effects, the framing... all are stunning, memorable. This is a film I'll see again and again in order to notice all those casual future details....

YOUNG DOCTORS IN LOVE (R)

is a lot of sight gags, piss and shit humor, sex jokes... All the soap opera cliches are strung together and mocked, all the doctor situations ever thought of are distorted and raped for humor...

And there is humor in this film; I laughed, chuckled, snirkled and grinned a hell of a lot. I'll willingly watch it again. It ain't art, but it's fun.

WHY, A FEW HAVE YOU ASKED, DO I NOT REVIEW MOVIES ANYMORE? THE ANSWER IS THAT SINCE WE STARTED TAKING SUBSCRIPTION TV, AND NOW CABLE TV WITH SHOWTIME, WE HAVE WATCHED UNCUT SECOND AND THIRD-RUN FILMS AND NOT BOTHERED TO GO OUT TO SEE FIRST-RUN FILMS AT THE THEATERS.

I HAD NOT THOUGHT MY REVIEWS OF THESE "LATE" MOVIES WOULD BE OF VALUE TO MANY OF SFR'S READERS.

BUT I DO ENJOY REVIEWING, SO HERE THEY BE, BETTER LATE THAN NEVER, INCLUDING ALL THE TV OFFERINGS I FEEL LIKE TALKING ABOUT.

--Richard E. Geis

REDS (PG)

is a marvelous recreation of the 1915-1920 era in the United States, and Russia, and crystalizes the socialist thinking and activity of the time. The film is a kind of litmus test for viewers---do you agree with the idealistic socialist ideas expressed by Jack Reed and his friends, or do you reject them? The movie forces choices.

The little-known (and little-taught) historical truths about the organized Christian nations' attempt via expeditionary forces and subversion (the United States included) to overthrow the Bolshevik revolution in Russia in 1918-19-20 quite likely explains the long-enduring paranoia in Russian rulers' minds now and is an ironic historical comment on the present situation in Nigaragua, and the recent shooting-down by Russia of a Korean airliner.

The acting by Warren Beatty (as Jack Reed), Diane Keaton (as his lover and later, wife, Louise Bryant), and Jack Nicholson (as Bryant's brief lover, Eugene O'Neill) is as good as they can do, but alas these people are more screen personalities than actors and their mannerisms and styles prevent the viewer from believing them as their characters.

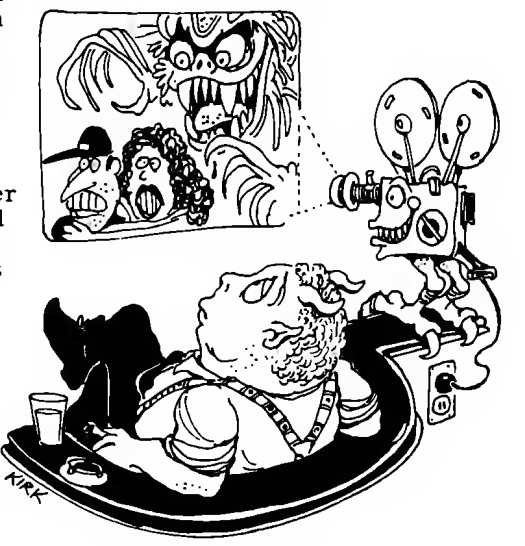
A good movie, well paced, with excellent, authentic sets. Too intellectual, too antagonistic to American values to be a popular, mass-appeal film. Understandably, it lost money.

THE ROAD WARRIOR (R)

This Australian action-violence film of a post-collapse world in which nomadic, brutal gangs rape and pillage in order to stay alive and scavenge gasoline for their collection of patched, jury-rigged vehicles is surprisingly well done in detail and authenticity---except that no one seems concerned with food.

Mel Gibson is okay as a loner concerned only with keeping his souped-up sports car going. He necessarily joins a "good guy" group who are defending a small oil well and refinery rig in the empty, desolate Australian outback. The film details a series of battles with a marauding super-gang of Genghis Khan types. Metal cross-bows are a major weapon; guns and especially ammo are rare.

The characters are strictly pulp types, but effectively presented. The pet dog of Gibson and the wild little boy with the razor-edged boomerang steal the film.



RICHARD E. GEIS

THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR (R)

This slow-paced (relative to THE ROAD WARRIOR) after-the-holocaust movie stars Yul Brynner as a superb knife-fighter who joins an enclave of survivors who live in a barricaded two-block area in New York city.

There is a rival gang-type group holed up nearby in a neighborhood jail. Plagues have wiped out most of the food plants. Feral street people scavenge for food.

Max von Sydow plays the leader of the "good guy" group who raise crops on their roofs and have a genius farmer who has developed plague-disease resistant seeds.

But there are so many implausibilities, so many places where plot-required stupidities cause problems, that the story's credibility sinks to zero and you wonder why they all bothered to make the movie in the first place.

FAST TIMES AT RIDGEMONT HIGH (R)

Yes, this is a cliche-ridden, formula sex-and-hi-jinks film about modern high school kids in the San Fernando valley.

But it moves fast, has good performances, sympathetic characters, and a lot of laughs and chuckles. It vividly displays the agony and bravado and insecurity and at times devastating (to old people) sophistication of today's youth. This movie is the best of its type I've seen: a fine mixture of satire, seriousness, character, humor, and underlying tolerance.

DAS BOOT (THE BOAT) (R)

is the story of a German U-boat during the decline of Germany's fortunes in World War II. We inhabit her during one tour of sea duty and damn near get killed!

We experience the boredom and crowding of actionless days and nights...and the sheer terror of being under attack by allied destroyers. We torpedo two or three ships of a convoy and are depth-bombed till we're nearly sunk. We get to know the officers and most of the crew.

The worst time is when the boat tries to run the Strait of Gibralter, is straffed, bombed and sunk! The boat is on the bottom, leaking, below her maximum depth, with rivets popping and ricochetting like cannon shells.

Yet the crew manages to rig a pump, keep the batteries from flooding, risks everything on one last attempt to rise---and barely makes it...only to be sunk in an Italian submarine base by attacking American low-level fighter-bombers. The captain and most of his crew are killed there.

Finis.

A fine, authentic, detailed, well-acted (by Germans--it's a German film) gripping movie. It's almost too intense, during the danger scenes. I could barely endure it.

This is what could be called a "man's" film---no women in the cast to speak of, and it concerns war, fighting, dying...has rough male humor, language. It is superbly dubbed in English.

This is likely the best submarine-in-war picture ever made.

SITTING DUCKS (R)

tells the story of two low-level Mafia executives who rip off 750,000 dollars of collection money and set off for Costa Rica via a limousine ride to Florida.

These guys are an absurb combination of dumb and competent. They meet and invite along two young women and a gas station attendent (to drive). The women are really Mafia hit-women whose job is to find the 750 G's and then waste the duo.

The acting is very good; the characters are so damned real!---a health nut with sex on the brain, a blabbermouth who wants sex so bad! A neurotic with a severe identity crisis...

The film underscores the message that people are never what they seem or what they claim.

The dialogue is cinema verite--full of pauses, clumsiness, interuptions...as if the actors had no actual dialog script, only a clear understanding of what each scene had to convey. For the dialog alone and the acting you should see this movie.

JUST OUR LUCK (TV)

is an updated, with-it, Liberally acceptable reprise of I DREAM OF JEANIE. In this version a TV weatherman with a minimal personality, who lives on the Ocean Front Walk of Venice, buys an old bottle, his cat knocks it off a table, and a hip black genie emerges and insists on serving him, saving his ass, and promoting romances.

Fairly good supporting cast. It's reasonably funny and modern, so some adult comedy is likely. It's worth watching, I imagine, for one season or until the writers begin repeating themselves. It's on ABC.

WE'VE GOT IT MADE (TV)

is one of the dumbest new sitcoms I've seen in years, with only one gag in its bag: a luscious, incredibly naive and innocent young woman takes a job as live-in maid for two absurd young bachelors whose girl friends constantly suspect hanky-panky. It's a variation of THREE'S COMPANY carried to sickening, mugging extremes. Watch it once and admire the pretty little blonde. After that...switch to another program.

TRAUMA CENTER (TV)

opened with a two-hour mix of the usual plot elements we have come to expect and be bored with: the new head of a SoCal medical trauma center (super emergency ward) is fighting with the hospital administrator for better and more equipment, trying to keep a top-notch doctor from resigning, trying to keep his personal life on an even keel as his recently divorced wife flies in to give him a rekindled set of emotional problems...

His staff is competent, nice, brave, with an ambulance crew of muscle and smart cracks).

The medical emergencies are the usual run of bloody disasters including a pregnant women in a car crash (the car teetering half off a bridge), a ceiling cave-in on a senior prom dance, a construction worker whose arm is sheered off... And a macabre bit: two armed robbers bring in their buddy to be "fixed up" not knowing he is already dead, and threaten to kill everyone in the Trauma Center emergency room if he dies.

This series needs more cranky, individualized characters, more true-to-life realism...but won't get them.

OH, MADELINE (TV)

features Madeline Kahn as a kookie housewife, a free-spirit who gets into weird, humorous scrapes and scraps. She has a distinctive voice, a fine comedic sense and some good writers. If you like her you'll like this new sitcom. But I suspect not enough people will like her. I do.

DEMPSEY (TV)

pretends to show Jack Dempsey's rise and fall in the fight game. Treat Williams does an okay job with his dull role (but Dempsey was a dull man, I suspect) and the TV movie--three hours--labors to hype interest by focusing on his

ex-wife's attempt to squeeze money from him, his problems with his manager, his problems with his new actress wife, his loss of the heavyweight title to Gene Tunney and his agony of self-doubt as he wrestles with a comeback attempt. It's ho-hum stereotype fight-picture reruns from beginning to end. The fight scenes were ridiculous.

THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP (R)

is a surprisingly well-done, subtly profound (laced with lots of humor and violence of a humorous kind) commentary on the absurdity and basic unfairness of life.

Just when things are looking good for Garp---

Robin Williams as the teenage-to-middle-age Garp is excellent. The supporting cast playing neurotic, bizarre characters (too many for one life, one would think) is superb.

Worth seeing twice for the bit players, for a fuller appreciation of this send-up of life in America.

THE TOY (PG)

features Richard Pryor as an unemployed college grad with high marks and low prospects who desperately hires out as a "toy" for a rich, spoiled-rotten-but unloved kid.

Mostly pratfall humor and exaggeration, with Pryor doing his usual hysterical fear routines and poor-dumb-black schtick contrary to the supposedly intelligent, mature character he is supposed to be playing.

Jackie Gleason as the boy's too-busy tycoon father is here repressed and relatively quiet (as opposed to his usual Ralph Kramden, Sheriff shouting, apoplectic roles) probably so as not to upstage or steal scenes from Pryor.

Worth seeing once. A routine comedy wasted by wasting the talents of both Pryor and Gleason.

MY FAVORITE YEAR (PG)

is a fond, humorous, satiric look back at live TV in 1955. Peter O'Toole plays a drunken, washed-up movie star (fairly obviously Errol Flynn) who suffers fools badly if he's drunk, better if he's sober. He has signed to do a comedy-variety show and is appalled and terrified to learn it is done live and before an audience!

A young comedy writer-gopher is assigned to keep him sober and on-time, an almost impossible task.

Peter O'Toole is here gaunt and seamed, a marvelous drunk, a tragic human being.

There is a satisfying happy ending. The humor seems too broad at times, though.

TRAIL OF THE PINK PANTHER (PG)

is a cobbled-together rip-off which is composed of a few unused bits of Peter Sellers' Inspector Clouseau character, snips of him from previous Pink Panther movies, and a faked-up storyline in which, for almost all of the movie, he is supposedly missing and presumed dead. A female TV reporter runs around interviewing the friends and associates of the famous detecitve Clouseau. The best supporting role is that of his superior in the French Surete, played by Herbert Lom, who is driven mad by Clouseau and who wishes him gone, gone at any cost.

But the film isn't funny enough and is sad for its constant reminders that Peter Sellers is dead, and for the spectacle of David Niven, ill with a real fatal disease, doing his last bit part, unable to speak, with Rich Little dubbing in his lines in a not-quite-right Niven voice.

Don't waste your time or money.

CARPOOL (TV)

is a dumb TV movie with a smidgin of class. Harvey Korman and his three pickup carpool members see a money bag fall from an armored car, pick it up...and fall into nearly a million dollars in untraceable $100 bills.

Moral and character conflict flows and trickles as they wrestle with greed and duty. Then the cops and the criminals enter the picture and....

The characterizations are rather well done, which gives this movie its only touch of class. Korman is excellent as a great pretender living a lie.

WHIZ KIDS (TV)

is a trendy sitcom in which a three-four clutch of high school kids (neatly balanced--a black, a girl, two white boys) who are computer whizes, especially one of them, the hero-boy, solves a murder mystery and a land fraud case by means of computer magic, primarily his/their ability to dip into restricted data banks and corporate computer programs.

They even use a computer to help them escape certain death at the hands of evil corporate executives and cohorts.

This will get pretty tiring. But it's well done, fast-paced, and aimed squarely at the younger computer buffs. Significantly, the girl doesn't know button-one about computers, and is only around to do supporting acting and gophering and to get in trouble from which the computer whizes can rescue her---by means of computers.

The boy-hero has an indulgent, supportive mother, the school authorities cannot handle him, and all his illegal computer data theft and intrusions are forgiven. Even digging up a grave to prove the corpse was stolen.

H.O.T.S. (R)

is a thinly disguised copy/switch on ANIMAL HOUSE in which a gaggle of college girls, pissed at being refused by a snobbish sorority, create their own, rival, organization called H.O.T.S.

The plot is silly, the credibility zero, the naked flesh quotient high. There is low humor and some top-notch breasts exposed. It's all supposed to be good fun, but there is a lurking sexism and a distinctive exploitation aroma.

THE MAKING OF A MALE MODEL (TV)

is an ironic reverse sexist film. A handsome hunk of young man, played by Jon-Erik Hexum, is discovered by a model agent, played convincingly by Joan Collins, who grooms him for the big-time commercial modeling biz. He has qualms but the money and fame are too luring. He falls for her and they have a hot affair.

Alas, she prefers to sample the next new handsome hunk...and Jon-Erik, pouting, tries to destroy his career with drugs and liquor. [Success comes high, it's a jungle out there...] Finally disillusioned by the money, the women who want him only for sex [not his mind], he goes home to Arizona to work the ranch he bought with his earnings. Poor fella.

PIERS ANTHONY

A Profile By Charles Platt

It's like Iowa with palm trees, this sleepy little town of Inverness, Florida, with stores selling fertilizer, feed and farm equipment, and pickup trucks parked outside at the curb. Why would a science fiction writer choose to move out here?

I run a quick mental inventory of all the fact and rumor that I know about Piers Anthony. Born 1934. He sold his first stories in the late 1960s. Acquired a reputation as a "difficult" author who has had some fights with publishers, some of whom he openly accused of blacklisting him and his work. Prolific; has produced ambitious science fiction (MACROSCOPE, TAROT) with high stress on pure concepts, characters functioning symbolically in complex games and equations. More recently, has produced numerous fantasy novels (e.g., the "Xanth" series) that are beginning to make the non-science-fiction best seller lists.

He's a strict vegetarian -- won't eat or wear anything derived from dead animals. And he seems reclusive: many people I know in the science fiction field have never met Piers Anthony, and even Keith Laumer, who lives less than twenty miles away, hasn't seen him in fifteen years.

I drive along blacktop country roads, past fertile farmland and small patches of forest. Following complex route instructions, I take an unpaved road into a wooded area that's been remade as a residential development. But the developer's sign out front looks worn and faded, as if the scheme never took off quite as planned, and the area has a funky, low-rent look.

"If you're willing to brave the wilds," Piers Anthony wrote to me, replying to my request for an interview, "I'm free any time, except at horse-feeding time..."

The dirt road turns into an even smaller dirt road. Simple wooden houses are scattered here and there among the trees. It looks to me as if human beings have hardly touched the land.

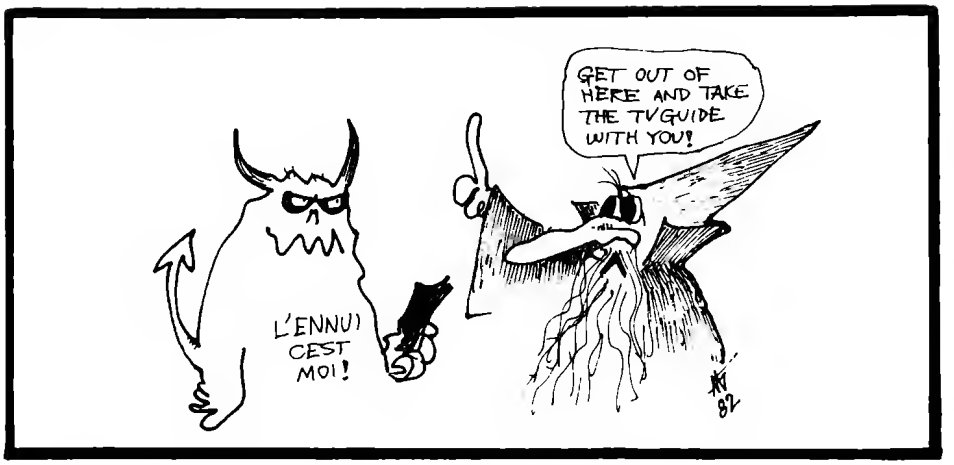
Piers Anthony's place is the only two-story building. A Volkswagen microbus and a Ford Fiesta are parked on the grass outside. There's a corral at the back with horses in it, and a pen full of dogs. Small outbuildings stand amid tall grass and succulent plants.

I stop the car. Here he is, running toward me from out of the woods, a wild-eyed bearded man in red T-shirt and old jeans, looking like some hippie-hobo of the forest. "How long are you going to be here?" are his first words after I've introduced myself and am closing the car door. "What I want to do is answer the questions, or whatever you have," he goes on, "and then there are some questions which I've written down which I have to ask you." He talks quickly, nervously, as if he just got word of some impending disaster, and we don't have much time.

I meet his wife, who seems quiet, thoughtful and slow-moving by comparison, and then Anthony leads me -- quickly, quickly! -- past the corral and the dogs and the chickens, out to his workshop, a small barn set well back from his home. Inside it's very rustic, like a summer house, but with lots of bookshelves. I barely have time to turn on the tape recorder before he starts talking, eager to maximize every moment.

"Just make sure any questions that you have get answered," he warns me. "I can talk -- I overflow -- I can write -- I mean, I write more than almost anybody, last year it was 480,000 words of manuscripts turned in to the publisher, and I do three drafts, on a manual typewriter, I paid $450 for it at the time, I could have had a Selectric for the same price, but I don't want to be hung up by a power failure, and sometimes you can have them for hours! This machine, office machine, has never let me down, and when I'm ready to go, I go, at my speed. That's why I use the special keyboard layout." (The keys are arranged by frequency of use, rather than in the standard Q-W-E-R-T-sequence.) "It's the world's fastest keyboard; I'm not the world's fastest typist, when I'm going well it may be thirty words a minute, partly because my brain is the limiting thing, and I do first drafts on this clipboard -- see, it has a box behind it, where the sheets that I've written can be put inside, with spare paper. I have upon occasion done as much as a thousand words in an hour, in longhand. I used to type first drafts but my little girl was born, she's fourteen years old now, but back when she was six months old, my wife went back to work, I wasn't earning enough as a writer, the number-one thing you need if you are a writer is a working wife to earn your living until you can make it, and so I took care of my little girl, I changed her diapers, and so on, fed her, everything, I couldn't take my eyes

(c) 1983 by Charles Platt



off that little girl, she was precocious, she was hyperactive, she would get into trouble, so I had to find a way to do my work and watch her too, and I moved to the self-contained clipboard. So she affected my whole writing career, but in a positive way, as it turned out, because I always have the clipboard now, if I wake up in the night, or go anywhere, any time, I can write. If I'm standing in line waiting for something, like my driver's license, I'm writing several hundred words. I don't care if people think it's strange, some people think that maybe I'm an FBI man making notes, I don't care, I keep going, I'm working literally almost all the time that's available, if I'm not sleeping, or eating -- actually, I write when I'm eating. And I have never been to a science fiction convention, I don't travel, I stay home, and if I'm not writing I'm answering fan mail. I answered thirty-three fan letters last month, this is the consequence of popularity, this is recent, I mean, in earlier years, I'd get about one fan letter a week --"

I manage to break in here to ask if his wife doesn't mind this non-stop work obsession.

"No, my wife understands, I mean, she had to quit her job because it got to the point where her total wages went to pay the tax on my income, and she got disgusted with that. You see, I used to earn $500 a year, $1,000, and then $5,000, but when I started earning $70,000, and $100,000, and I suspect it'll be about $150,000 this year, I have launched into the big time. I used to have arguments, I had one with Dean Koontz, he was saying he was earning almost $100,000, and he didn't need to pay attention to nitwits like me. Well, I don't know how Dean Koontz is doing now, he's writing cheap novels pseudonymously, so I suspect the positions are reversed. I am now earning it, but I don't make any claims to being suddenly a genius because I make a lot of money. The money, as you know, is likely to be inversely proportional to merit, and my most thoughtful pieces are likely to earn less than my least thoughtful. When I'm doing a Xanth novel, I go through it about double the rate of anything else. For Avon Books I write science fiction, for Del Rey Books I write fantasy, I wrote A SPELL FOR CHAMELEON for them, it won the British Fantasy Award, and then the subsequent ones started selling better and better, and started paying. It's nice to write what you like, but you don't necessarily get rich on it. I may be one of the most commercial writers you'll interview, in the sense that I write the cheap stuff that sells big. By training -- I have a degree in creative writing -- by education -- I was born in England, my parents each graduated from Oxford University, and I have the background, the literary background, and what am I doing? Light entertainment. But, I mean, the money -- after struggling along all these years, at low-paying stuff, or trying to, I've made the shift. And I can't say I regret it. I regret it in the intellectual sense that I wish I could have done a piece of such quality that I would get an award from the Nobel committee, but the compensation for this is money, and I'll take the money! At the same time, I still make myself do some serious stuff, because I want to keep in touch, I want to be in good mental condition just as I want to be in good physical condition, which is the reason I exercise, I'm physically -- one of my controversial statements! -- I regard myself as one of the healthiest science fiction writers of my age. You can see dirt-marks on the last beam over there, I do my chin-ups there, and in light clothing I can do twenty-five chins, which is twice as many as I could do in high school. Yesterday I did my run on schedule and I broke my record for my three-mile run, I'm very much into physical fitness, health, partly because I am forty-seven years old, I'm middle-aged, and this is about the time when people become aware of this."

He pauses to take a breath. While he's been talking I've been taking in my surroundings. This large hut, or small barn, smells of sun-baked wood and dusty books. The peaked roof is of bare boards and beams. The working area is walled in with steel shelves of reference volumes on history, geography, science and politics. We are sitting talking at the far end, on an old convertible couch. Behind me, the wood paneling is detectably warm from the sun outside.

I'm interested by Anthony's frank talk about his fantasy novels, but not entirely convinced. Surely, a serious novel like his MACROSCOPE earns more in the long term than a lightweight fantasy that's soon forgotten?

"Okay, MACROSCOPE was published in 1969, and it has brought me a total of about $28,000, I can look up the exact figure if you like, I'm very careful about such things. SOURCE OF MAGIC, which was published in 1979, ten years later than MACROSCOPE, has already brought me $31,000. And I buzzed it out in a hurry, just because it went fast, and was fun.

"The kind of thing that you can spend five years working on, and end up with a hundred pages -- there should be a place in the market for this, as well as for the stuff that you spend ten days writing and it sells 250,000 copies. I do both; the trouble is, I fail on the quality material, and so I am now known, probably, for the lightest material that I do. I'm sure that you assumed that I would defend the light material and say how great it is, but I don't defend it, I say it's great for money, it's great for fun, but I wouldn't call it great literature."

I ask him who he blames for this state of affairs. Himself? His readers? His publishers? The distributors?

"Everybody. Oh, there's blame to go everywhere. I struggle with this, I say 'Why-why-why?' and I beat my head against the wall. But I try to judge by my own re-

actions, when I'm watching television, and I don't eschew television, it may be a 'vast wasteland,' but when I hear that said I always think of the desert, which is a wasteland, but if you look you'll find it has its own ecology, there are things in the desert that don't exist elsewhere and should continue, so that 'wasteland' just means that human beings don't have much use for it, the animals and insects that are there do, it's not a wasteland to them.

"Anyway, what do I watch when I have complete freedom to watch anything on TV that I want to? That was the question I was trying to address by my circuitous route. Well, likely as not it will be some cheap, junk thing, Magnum, P.I., something like that, when I could be watching the New York Philharmonic. But when I've done hard work, I want to relax, I do not want something that's going to try my intellect. I want something where it doesn't matter whether I pay attention to it or whether I don't. I want it because it is junk. Same thing with my readers, I don't think they are determinedly negative or lowbrow, it's that they're tired when they come home, they don't want to read WAR AND PEACE, they just want to relax and be entertained, without any strain on body or mind, and TV is geared to do this, and so is some fiction."

But now that he's become successful, couldn't he write something more challenging and hope this time that it will sell purely on the basis of his name?

"Well, the series I'm about to sell to Avon, called BIO OF A SPACE TYRANT, is space opera, deliberately, and yet I discover as I write it in first draft that I am going to get into more direct social comment than ever before in my life. I'm not saying, 'Here's my name and reputation, pay attention to what I say.' I'm sneaking it in.

"I put it to the publisher. 'Supposing someone who really can write tried space opera?' You realize, a lot of what I say sounds conceited, and yet I believe it, I believe in myself, I can write, I don't claim I'm the finest writer, but I'm one of the good ones. I can do your kind of writing, I can do commercial writing, I can do it all, and not many people can do it all. I can do the lightest, funniest fantasy that's on the market -- nobody's even competing with my fantasy, I've got that market to myself. And I can do the most deadly serious writing. BIO OF A SPACE TYRANT is based on the Vietnamese boat people, really. They left Vietnam, they came up to Thailand, they weren't rescued. The men were killed, the women were raped, kids thrown overboard. The women would be raped ten times before they finally get to land, only two survivors, and nobody will believe them -- they say 'Where are your witnesses?' All the witnesses were killed. I said to myself, 'Supposing that happened in space?' And my mind started working, and I've now got a five-novel series going. I've set it in the solar system, my people are Spanish-speaking, and they finally get to Jupiter, the land of plenty, 'Send me your homeless,' and so forth, but the people there say 'Sorry, there's a new administration, the policy has changed, we will tow you back out to space.' This is the Reagan policy, you understand. If he had his way he would tow them back out into the ocean and not worry about them."

I can't help wondering if everyone will take this series as seriously as he does -- critics, in particular. Does Piers Anthony feel that he has been mistreated in the past by his critics?

"Yes and no. When I had trouble with Ballantine Books, which blacklisted me rather than be honest -- and because I actually went to a lawyer, I can say this, if anybody was going to sue, I was going to sue. They sold a book in England, they sold a book in Holland, and in Germany. Not only didn't they pay me, they did not even put it on their statements. I got angry, and I sent them a detailed letter. I understand that Betty Ballantine said it was the most offensive letter she had ever received in her life. All I did was demand a correct accounting. But I should add that reports at Ballantine Books are now made honestly.

"Anyway, this is where the trouble started, because I started getting blacklisted, and this went into criticism. There are still areas where I can't get reviewed, because people heard stories about what a bad person I was."

I get the impression from this that he feels publishers are liable to cheat anyone they can, simply for the money; and he tends to be careful of those he deals with in the outside world. Does this have anything to do with the childhood alienation that so many science fiction writers talk about?

"When I was growing up I was small. When I graduated in ninth grade I weighed a hundred pounds and I was five feet tall. I was the smallest, shortest person, male or female, in my class, in Westown school, in Pennsylvania.

"In addition to being small, I came to this country when I was six years old, from England, and they were trying to correct my English accent, and I resisted it. So, outsider? Yes. And one who was small. I understand it.

"But, you see, I grew. From five feet to about five-eleven after that. I have some questionable pleasures, but one was at the twenty-fifth class reunion, and a man I stood next to there, he was about six feet and had gotten fat and paunchy and so on, and I was there with my little girl and picked her up, and he said 'Careful, she weighs a lot.' The pleasure in this was that he was the class bully. He was six feet back then, when I was five feet. He was beating me up. And twenty-five years later, he couldn't even catch me if he wanted to. If he did, he wouldn't be able to take me. I had a very sinister pleasure knowing that I knew it and that he knew it."

I also get a sense that he is a compulsive achiever, from his

self-imposed work schedule to his physical-fitness program. When he talks, he stresses all the verbs -- especially words like "can," "will," or "do."

"It's true that, even when I run, I try to break my own records even though I know intellectually that I'm just doing it for exercise. If I run ten-minute miles, I know I'll get the exercise. Why then, am I running seven-minute miles?

"I do get compulsive. When I get into something, I do drive, I like to do the best I can do, in whatever I do. I do my work, I do my homework, you see all the reference books here.

"When I don't write, sometimes I find myself going into a depression, when I spend two days answering fan mail and not writing. It creeps up on me. I want to write. I feel a compulsion. And when I am writing I feel happy, I feel satisfied."

But where does this compulsion come from?

"I don't know. I look at animals and I see puppies raised together -- we have two, and one is compulsive, always competing, and the other takes it easy. It's not anything we did, it's not the environment, it comes from the genes.

"My grandfather was called the Mushroom King of Pennsylvania. Half the mushrooms this country produces are still produced in that area. He sold out two weeks before the crash of 1929, but the people he trained went into business for themselves. He was dedicated to business and making money.

"But my father went into education. He taught Spanish, he became the intellectual and therefore was not rich. Now here I am; my father certainly wasn't going to shove me into business, he rejects the business ethic, the idea of driving hard to make money repelled him -- understandably. I myself don't go for business that much, but I do have the drive, and I'm making the sort of money my grandfather used to. I am not foolish about money at all. I don't waste it, you don't see me going off and buying Cadillacs, no, you see me out there splitting wood, because we have a wood-burning stove, and solar-powered water heating, if the sun doesn't shine we don't bother with hot water, because I don't like to pay fuel bills. I'm a miser! I like to think that if my grandfather were alive today, and looked to see who has the attitude that most closely approximates his -- it would be mine."

At this point, his wife buzzes us on an intercom from the house and says that lunch is ready. He's been talking for about an hour and a half (I have included here, perhaps one-third of all that was actually said) and seems unhappy about stopping.

We walk out into the sun. I notice ants in the sandy soil, moving relentlessly to and fro, carrying enormous grains of sand in their mandibles. It seems appropriate, somehow, that Piers Anthony should work right next door to an ant hill. I imagine him figuring out some way to rate his work-day against theirs, so he can find out who's ahead.

The inside of the home is a cheerful but total shambles. He explains that they were cheated by a dishonest builder who gave them a galvanized iron roof instead of the everlasting stainless steel one that they'd paid for. They sued the builder, he went bankrupt and the house was never completed. That was four years ago. So the floor is of unfinished concrete, the ceiling of unfinished wood and when I use the bathroom I notice that, although there's a shower fixture, the bath has never been installed. Instead, there's a huge mound of newspapers and magazines.

Piers Anthony explains more of his philosophy as we eat cheese omelettes together. He's used his royalties not on his own home (which looks, indeed, like a hippie commune displaced from Northern California). Instead, he's been buying up land all around the house; he says that he and his wife "don't care to gamble on the quality of neighbors who might move in ... So we buy all the land we can, to prevent it from being settled." They've accumulated thirty acres, so far.

After lunch, his wife, who used to work as a programmer, unearths their Atari home computer from beneath some plastic placemats that protect it from dust, and she demonstrates the word-processing program -- which Piers Anthony doesn't use, because the Atari has a conventional typewriter keyboard, and he's adapted himself to the special layout on his manual typewriter. And anyway, computers are vulnerable to power cuts. He'd rather stick with his strictly non-electrical system.

He quizzes me for New York gossip, and tells me how hopelessly naive I am for believing that most publishers are honest and most editors can be trusted. "Most publishers are amoral. They don't believe what they do is wrong, but the writer had better beware."

And on this ominous note it's time for me to leave; because, this same afternoon, I must now go and interview Keith Laumer.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES:

Piers Anthony's first novel, CHTHON (1967), describes the episodic adventures and gradual self-discovery of a resolutely capable man attempting to master and escape from the complex social system of an underground prison in an alien planet. It is claustrophobically powerful.

Anthony's next ambitious work after this was MACROSCOPE (1969), which attempts a kind of unified cosmology of astrology and science, and micro- and macrocosms.

In the 1970s he began writing pure fantasy novels such as the highly popular Xanth series, full of puns and other light humor. His OMNIVORE sequence (1968-76) and TAROT (1979-80, conceived as one novel but published in three volumes) are his more serious work, in which great descriptive color is applied to highly inventive, exotic creatures and landscapes, with the human characters acting almost symbolic roles in the complex plots.

THE VIVISECTOR

BY DARRELL SCHWEITZER

CONTEMPORARY HORROR

Now that we've been examining Fantasy, a brand-new genre made up of the oldest type of literature in the world, let's turn to something similar. Modern Horror or Contemporary Horror (or, to publishers' sales departments, Stephen King-Type Books; the Fantasy equivalent being Tolkein-Type Books) is a new genre. It has existed about ten years. ROSEMARY'S BABY and THE EXORCIST were two of the most important early works, and then along came Stephen King and everything fell into place. For the first time there was a clearly-defined Horror section in the bookstore. To fill it, there were genre books, with a very definite packaging, marketing strategy, and presumably sales expectation. (I understand that Suzy McKee Charnas' THE VAMPIRE TAPESTRY, which was published as science fiction as a Timescape hardcover, was moved over to the Modern Horror as a paperback because the minimum expected sales of an MH novel far exceed those of an SF one.) Horror novels have been around for centuries. The horror tale is another specialized substream of fantasy, which clearly broke off in the last half of the 18th century. It had another flowering in the late 19th century and this continued into the first two or three decades of the 20th, and then like fantasy in general, went underground for a while, with material appearing in specialized magazines (WEIRD TALES) and an occasional novel breaking into the mainstream, such as Dorothy Macardle's THE UNINVITED, which was sort of the EXORCIST of 1942, and Shirley Jackson's more remembered THE HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE.

But then, as Norman Spinrad and others have pointed out, there isn't any mainstream in American publishing any more. There are only genres. As genrification took over, but before the Modern Horror category was invented, you could watch publishers desperately shuffling around books, unsure of how to market them. Some horror novels became mysteries or "novels of suspense." Some became either science fiction or gothics. Some even changed categories between printings. (Examples: Fritz Leiber's CONJURE WIFE first appeared in a specialty magazine, UNKNOWN. First book publication was in WITCHES THREE, a fantasy collection. It has since been published as a gothic, an occult (1960s style) novel and as Modern Horror. Evangeline Walton's WITCH HOUSE began life as an Arkham House book, then became a nightgown-and-light-in-the-window gothic, and has resurfaced recently from Del Rey as an attempted tie-in to the "Mabinogion" series. The most absurd case I can think of is an occult novel by Talbot Mundy made up to look like a women's romance, edited by Barbara Cartland, with her name much bigger than his on the cover.)

But ultimately readers are disappointed with such tactics (I doubt Cartland fans liked the Mundy novel) and a new category has to be invented. So it was. Now such books go straight to the proper audience, but they all tend to look alike after a while. Except for a few recognizable brand-names, the writers are mostly unknowns. They have to be since, unlike science fiction writers, they don't get a chance to build up much of a track record in the magazines.

First, a brand-name novel, by the guy who started it all.

CHRISTINE

By Stephen King
Viking Press
1983, 526 pp., $16.95

It won't do much good for me to tell you that yes, this is a good one, and you'll probably enjoy it. You've probably read it already. You and several million other people. King has the awesome ability to appeal to just about everyone, from very spohisticated readers down to people who read nothing else. Last time I saw figures on one of his books, it had sold to something like 10% of the population. But we're told that only 5% or so reads more than three books a year. That's a substantial penetration into the non-book audience. There are probably people out there who are really learning to read for the first time on Stephen King books. To which I say good for them and good for him.

It just so happens that this is a good novel by any standard. Often we assume that anything that's that popular must be trash. I don't pay much attention to best seller lists. I recall the time at the 1976 World Fantasy convention when SALEM'S LOT was a finalist for the awards, the nominees having been announced for the first time at the convention itself, and I asked Dave Hartwell who this Stephen King fellow was anyway, and what SALEM'S LOT was. He said (if I remember correctly), "It's probably the best fantasy novel of the past five years."

Indeed. Sometimes best sellers are good. They don't have to be best sellers, but it can happen. Call it a coincidence.

CHRISTINE is the story of bright, put-upon Arnie Cunningham, a high-school student who suddenly falls in love with a 1958 Plymouth Fury named Christine. It's a wreck, but he works obsessively to restore it, jeopardizing his college career, his family, his life savings. He is, uh, possessed by the car, and before long this is clearly a very unhealthy situation. The previous owner was a spiteful, evil man, and before long Arnie begins to resemble him. And the car re-

stores itself. When some thugs thrash it, it restores itself all over again, and the thugs come to bad ends.

Arnie's girlfriend nearly chokes to death in the car (in exactly the same manner as the previous owner's daughter did) because the car is jealous. The car is alive, charged up with the psychic residue of hatred, frustration and death until it becomes rather like the Overlook Hotel of THE SHINING, only smaller and with wheels. Arnie's best friend knows what is happening and tries to save him. There is a (excuse the expression) bang-up conclusion.

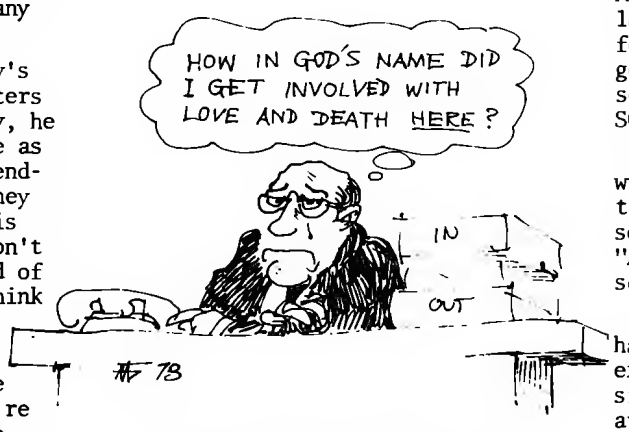
There have been haunted car stories before and car-drives-man stories, but there's never been one quite like CHRISTINE. King writes in a clear, direct style that never shows off, but does occasionally hit a line that is exactly, spookily right. When Arnie's friend first meets Roland LeBay, the original owner of Christine, his first impression is "... it was as if a cold November wind could think. I can't put it any better than that." (p. 12)

Almost as good, when LeBay's brother is describing the letters he used to write to his family, he says, "The letters, illiterate as they were, represented a tremendous effort for my brother. They were his suspension bridge, his novel, his great effort. I don't think he wrote them to get rid of the poison in his heart. I think he wrote them to spread it around." (p. 100)

But the characters are the core of any King novel. They're vividly realised. They all become very real to us. They aren't as detailed as some of the ones in the world's great classics, and you might even say they're types. But the essential difference is (and here we come to why King is so popular), they're types taken from life, rather than from literary convention, the way old-time pulp characters were. King is a pulp writer, a popular storyteller who never pretended to be anything more. But he isn't crippled by company policy and formula. He doesn't have to go to standard casting for an Evil Chinaman, a rough-and-ready and humorous Irishman, a pompous German, a comic Black, a Mad Scientist, or a Square-jawed Hero, none of whom ever really existed. The reader of ARGOSY, circa 1920 couldn't look around him and see the people he was reading about. King's reader can. We have all known his characters. We have been many of them.

Add to this decent prose, the ability to grab the reader -- any reader -- by the guts and not let go till the last page, and a no-bullshit beginning/middle/end plotting sense, and you have the most popular fiction writer in English maybe, certainly the most popular horror writer of all time. It also happens that King can be suitably eerie when the occasion demands it. He gets his best effects with little things, the way Christine's odometer runs backwards and sometimes people in the car seem to be traveling into the past (i.e. the late 50s). He can keep his story going through the lives of his characters, and thus doesn't need an apparition on every page. This gives him a chance to pace the strange events properly.*

He is occasionally self-indulgent. There are scenes which aren't really necessary. They're good scenes, soundly dramatic and narrative. If a writer is going to be self-indulgent, I prefer



this to the Delany/Heinlein method of twenty pages of windy lecture, but enough is enough. Further, he sometimes goes to excess in Halloween effects. When Roland LeBay's ghost appears inside Christine, it isn't necessary for him to be a rotting corpse with maggots crawling on his face. It would suffice (and probably be more effective) for him to look almost his old self, maybe with a few blotches and an odor. CHRISTINE will inevitably be filmed. Unfortunately, there's just enough banality in it to let a second-rate director turn it into a bad movie.

It will remain a good book, not as profound or subtle as Machen or James or Lovecraft, but it's one hell of an exciting read. It might even make you a little less embarrassed about being seen in public reading a best seller.

*Remember a TV show called THE SIXTH SENSE? It had some of the worse horror story pacing I've ever encountered. I got cynical very quickly, got out a watch, and discovered that there was an apparition, hallucination, or other psychic event every five minutes exactly, three to the quarter-hour, all the way through each episode. There was almost no story. In syndication, the hour shows were cut down half an hour and it didn't make any difference.

A COLD BLUE LIGHT

By Marvin Kaye & Parke Godwin
Charter Books, 1983, 294 pp., $3.50

It's a coincidence that the authors of this one happen to be prominent in other fields. Kaye is the author of THE INCREDIBLE UMBRELLA and several mysteries, THE SOAP OPERA SLAUGHTERS, BULLETS FOR MACBETH, etc. Godwin wrote an Arthurian novel, THE FIRELORD and later won a World Fantasy Award for "The Fire When it Comes." Together they've collaborated on two science fiction novels, MASTERS OF SOLITUDE and WINTERMIND.

But they're not brand name MH writers. Their bylines are so tiny on the cover you have to search them out among the blurbs, "A novel of beckoning horror," and so forth.

Actually, it's a pretty good haunted house novel. The plot is extremely familiar: The weird and sinister Aubrey house is investigated by five people, several of them psychics, all with their own neuroses which get worked out in individual ways as the festivities proceed. The opening is quite slow and a bit jagged, with lots of shifting viewpoints, occasionally confusing stream-of-consciousness, and static sections which fill in the characters without progressing the story. However, these pauses for extra characterization pay off because the book turns entirely on the five characters, and their five distinct viewpoints toward what is happening in the house. They are all as well-realised and convincing as any characters I've seen in any novel in a long time. Kaye and Godwin's ability to bring the five of them alive, and make them interact with the phenomena is what makes A COLD BLUE LIGHT worth reading. In a more conventional novel, several spear carriers would get done in by Things (like that guy on STAR TREK who would teleport someplace with Kirk and Spock -- you knew he was put

there for the express purpose of getting killed), before someone would uncover the Ghastly Secret.

Well, there is a ghastly secret to the house and it is uncovered (sort of), but there are also secrets in the minds of each of the characters. The book ends in too much chaos and confusion for my taste. We don't quite come to any understanding. A couple characters get killed off in extremely perfunctory ways.

The ending doesn't quite work. But, after a slow beginning, you will read this book with considerable interest. There's no doubt these guys can write. Call it the torso of a first-rate novel.

UNKNOWN WRITER OF THE ISSUE:

I've decided to institute a new policy for my columns. Each time I will pick a book by a completely unknown writer and review it. "Completely unknown" means I've never heard of the guy. This may prove hard to do in science fiction, in which case I'll pick one I've never read before, but in horror fiction it's easy. Aside from King, Straub, Grant and a few others, they're all unknowns. So I picked a standard issue Modern Horror novel:

SOUL EATER

By K. W. Jeter
Tor, 1983, 314 pp., $3.50

And regretted that I did ... This one isn't so much bad as a completely standard product. It's one of those Sinister Children books, depending heavily on the shock value of cute little girls creeping around in the dark with big knives. Jeter writes competently enough, though with a tendency to get hysterical in the Scary Parts, but I rapidly discovered that I wasn't getting interested in the book at all. It's like a perfectly competent made-for-TV movie that you watch for a while, and then your attention wanders. He doesn't have Stephen King's Robert E. Howard-esque ability to drag you along by the sheer intensity of his narrative, or Kaye and Godwin's ability to create interesting characters, much less the kind of genuinely original outlook to be found in the classical horror writers. Le Fanu or Benson or Blackwood, he isn't. But I suppose that if you read these things in huge quantities, this one is sorta okay.

WHISPERS IV

Edited by Stuart David Schiff
Doubleday, 1983, 182 pp., $11.95

Speaking of classic horror fiction, the modern equivalent of the traditional Literary weird tale is to be found in the WHISPERS anthologies. WHISPERS magazine is less frequently of late, which means (there being less to reprint from) a higher percentage of new material per volume.

You can rely on Stuart Schiff's judgment. He's got two really fine stories here: "Into Whose Hands" by Karl Edward Wagner is an extremely subtle study of an evil mental hospital attendant. At first glance, it seems to be a mainstream story, based on Wagner's experience as a psychiatrist, but if you pay close attention to the use of seemingly inconsistent details, there's a definite element

of terror. "The Reflex-Man in Whinnymuir Close" by Russell Kirk is an effective tale of ghostly (or doppelgangerish) doings in 18th century Scotland, written in an excellent approximation of the prose of the period. Kirk is an extremely literate (and, yes, literary) writer, one of the few who could pull off such a stylistic feat. He is also one of the most serious ghost story writers going, in that he is using his work to say something, the way Lovecraft or Machen did, rather than merely to say "boo!" There is real substance in his work, in addition to excellent period detail. I'd place him somewhere between M.R. James and Charles Williams. He has nothing in common with the average King-imitator. (It is sad but unsurprising, then, that his one recent novel, LORD OF THE HOLLOW DARK, sank without a trace.) Every new Kirk story is an event for the connoisseur.

Also included are new stories by Frank Belknap Long, Charles L. Grant, Tanith Lee, Frances Garfield, Hugh B. Cave, Michael Shea and others. They're of varying quality. The Lee is quite disappointing. One of the best ones is a delightfully nasty first sale, "Tell Us About the Rats, Grandpa" by Stephen Kleinhen which, as Schiff puts it, demonstrates why slush piles are read.

The best of the reprints is Ramsey Campbell's "Out of Copyright" which is also delightfully nasty. Authors take heart. It's about an eldritch fate which befalls a piratical anthologist.

REFERENCE:

H.P. LOVECRAFT

By S.T. Joshi
Starmont Reader's Guide #13
Starmont, 1982, 82 pp., $5.95

A most distinguished addition to the Starmont Series. Reader's guides tend to be written by just about anyone, but Starmont has managed to get the leading Lovecraft scholar. Joshi is a Classics scholar at Princeton, the compiler of the definitive Lovecraft bibliography (Kent State University Press), editor of H.P. LOVECRAFT, FOUR DECADES OF CRITICISM (Ohio University Press) and the journal LOVECRAFT STUDIES. His view of HPL is considerably different from that of the average fan critic. He regards Lovecraft highly as a philosopher. He is more equipped than most to trace the influences of Greek and Roman classics in Lovecraft's work. His weakness is a comparative ignorance of other fantasy writers, particularly Lovecraft's pulp contemporaries. We don't get a lot of literary context. But perhaps for the first time, we get a view of HPL's work as a whole, not just the fiction, but the essays, letters and verse all taken as expressions of the same mind. The most insightful parts are those dealing with Lovecraft's philosophy (his life and art in the context of that) and a brief section at the back about the use of poetic devices in Lovecraft's prose, which really should be expanded into an article. The whole book is much too brief but it's meaty and an important contribution to the already extensive body of Lovecraft scholarship.

RAISING HACKLES

BY ELTON T. ELLIOTT

SF AND BUSINESS: CRASS COMMERCIALISM OR HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

When an event like the Pocket/ Scott Meredith controversy hits, it points up the need to understand more fully the role bottom-line business decisions play in sf publishing.

Business operates on one imperitive: profit. It is as true in publishing (of which sf is a major growth segment) as it is in cars, banks or hamburger stands.

To understand what caused Pocket to take the radical step of hiring an out-of-house packager to replace an in-house editor we must recognize two major factors: the increasing growth and profitability of sf in publishing, and the financial situation of Pocket's parent company, Gulf & Western.

Science fiction has proven over the past six years, and especially the past year to be a growing field with an ability to make megabucks in profits if---and this is crucial--- if it is done correctly with people who are knowledgeable and sympathetic. Examples abound:

The top four money-making movies of all time are science fiction (the Star Wars trilogy and E.T.); The highest rated show for NBC in the 82-83 TV season was the cryptically titled "V"; In syndication, STAR TREK is still the most popular TV show of all time; In book publishing the Fall of '82 through Spring of '83 bestseller lists were dominated by sf and fantasy (and related) titles. At one time in January of 1983, 80% of the titles on the PUBLISHERS WEEKLY bestseller lists were sf.

As sf was booming, changes were taking place in Gulf & Western. A new Chairman, Martin Davis, was rapidly streamlining the corporation, selling off unproductive companies acquired by the previous management. G&W once owned a zinc company, a sugar plantation, ran the Miss Universe pageant, Madison Square Garden, and dozens of other unrelated businesses.

Because of the variety and spotty performances of these investments, G&W stock was not highly regarded on Wall Street. In spite of Davis's streamlining efforts, as of late August G&W stock was selling at an earnings multiple of 8 while the industry average according to Standard & Poor's 500 list was 13. Analysts consider Paramount Studios and Simon & Shuster to be among the corporation's strongest assets and its building blocks for the future.

In this high-pressure environment, the mandate for better profit performance by Pocket Books is understandable.

In sf publishing the big profitmaker is Del Rey Books; most of the bestsellers come from their releases. Examples: hardcovers---Clarke, Donalsdon, McCaffrey, paperbacks---Asimov, Anthony, Heinlein. In fact, Piers Anthony several times has had both trade hardcover and mass-market softcover books on bestseller lists.

The Pocket sf line was not as successful. The decision to terminate Hartwell and the Timescape line and to hire as outside packager first Scott Meredith, and when that fell apart Jim Baen, was probably inevitable. It is part of a pattern recurring throughout American industry more and more often. To lower expenses and enhance revenues, labor costs are cut (witness Continental Airline) and often outside contractors are hired to replace salaried employees. This saves on everything from payroll taxes to medical and pension plans.

What does all this portend for the future of science fiction and fantasy publishing?

The Thorny View would insist this is a disaster for sf writers, that outside packagers who will be paid less than an in-house editor to insure lower costs up-front, will pay writers bare-minimum advances and lower royalty rates in order to make a profit for themselves. The Thorny View sees a return to the bad old days of $1000 advances and 1¢ a word rates, and perhaps elimination of royalties altogether.

The Rosy View thinks sf will become even more profitable and will encourage new companies and create new markets, new demand, which will increase advances and rates, cometitively.

I think to some degree both views are correct: Some companies will attempt to gouge writers to enlarge their bottom-line. At the same time new publishers will smell profits and enter the field (and not necessarily from New York), and that can only help. Some of these companies might even treat sf and fantasy and their writers with the respect and class they deserve.

MUSINGS:

The Hugo Awards. Congratulations to Isaac Asimov and the rest of the winners. In particular I'm pleased to see FOUNDATION'S EDGE won. It took a lot of courage for Asimov to write another book onto the end of what was generally regarded as a classic series. More than three decades had passed since the last story saw print in the old ASTOUNDING yet Asimov was able to recapture the style and enthusiasm that made the other three books so memorable.

I am sorry though not surprised that Barry Malzberg did not win for EMGINES OF THE NIGHT. A more honest, searing, soul-searching book I have never read. He let it all out and said some things that people in this field should recognize and face up to. So much of the time while reading that book I kept nodding my head and thinking 'Yes, I know what he means,' ....even when I didn't agree with his opinions.

Next year DREAM MAKERS II by Charles Platt is elligible; it too is a thoughtful book that deserves consideration.

Till next, cheers.

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OTHER VOICES

THE FATE OF THE EARTH

By Jonathan Schell
(Based on research for NEW YORKER magazine)
Knopf, $11.95

REVIEWED BY KARL EDD

Schell graphically lets you realize what nuclear war will mean to the United States and to the world. One large nuclear bomb of the megatonnage now in Russia's stockpile will vaporize 20,000,000 people in the New York area. Their converted body substances will descend as radioactive ash in every nook and cranny of the United States.

Only a hundred such bombs would end all life on earth with the possible exception of some insects, probably in the beetle family. Traces of life might yet exist in deep ocean mud. Might. It is more likely that all grasses and cereal grains will die. Mammalian skeletons are made up of the lime that is pulled out of the earth by plant roots. No grasses, no mammals. Schell estimates that all earth life would vanish for at least a hundred thousand years.

Hiroshima anecdotes are related. Some persons there, in agony, tore the fried eyeballs out of their own eye sockets. A mother picked up a pink, squid-like thing. It was her skinned child. Nearby a three-year-old child tried to open its dead mother's lips to give her some water. (True war guilt, however, rests squarely on the shoulders of the British and American businessmen who -- long before Pearl Harbor -- squeezed the Japanese out of their Malaysian rubber markets.)

Schell sings no stirring song of the Green Beret. He does not prettify war. If you make it through the missiles, the radiation and the disappearance of foodstuffs and contaminated water, you will not escape the ultraviolet radiation. Soon there will be no Tower of Babel tongue but that of silence except for Coriolis winds that will sweep the treeless, herbless landscape.

There are, in physics, only four fundamental forces: Gravity, electromagnetic, the "weak" force of radioactive decay and neutrino movement (See THE DANCING WU LI MASTERS), and the mysteriously convoluted "strong" force that holds atomic nuclei intact. The strong force has been measured as about 100 times stronger than electromagnetism and counterbalances the desire of positively charged protons to move out of a nucleus. It is very likely that though the weak force of radiation is, per se, 1,000 times weaker than electromagnetism (which is the measuring standard) there will be so much of it in a post-holocaust world that biological cells as we now know them with nucleus, mitochondria (in some instances), membrane, cell wall, etc., will not be able to exist.

If one can remain philosphically detached in contemplating the possibilities, suffering and evil will be eradicated with the final blast. And once genocide has occurred, further genocide will be impossible; but in the meanwhile we must live perpetually at the brink, driven toward death by the Id, repelled in this drive by the super-ego. We are SS troops who place barbed wire around ourselves so we may, however unintentionally, destroy the unborn sons of unborn sons.

Schell feels that we are yet collectively under the outdated spell of the military philosopher, Clausewitz. If we break this spell, we MAY survive as a species. If we do not break the spell, we deserve extinction. If we utilize nuclear war as a threat, we pose as irrational in order to be rational. Who then will know when a rational, posing as an irrational, has secretly become irrational? And touches the button. The brink, accordingly, is always an asymptotic curve and never a plateau.

This sobering book closes with discussion of a list of what-ifs that we, as world citizens, must answer or at least discuss if we do not wish the dead hand of Clausewitz to welcome us into that dark night of extinction that is as stupefying to contemplate as is the perhaps erroneous concept of eternity, and certainly that of infinity.

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YESTERDAY'S TOMORROWS
Favorite Stories from Forty Years as a Science Fiction Editor

Edited by Frederik Pohl
Berkley Books, Oct. 1982
431 pp., $8.95

REVIEWED BY DAVID A. TRUESDALE

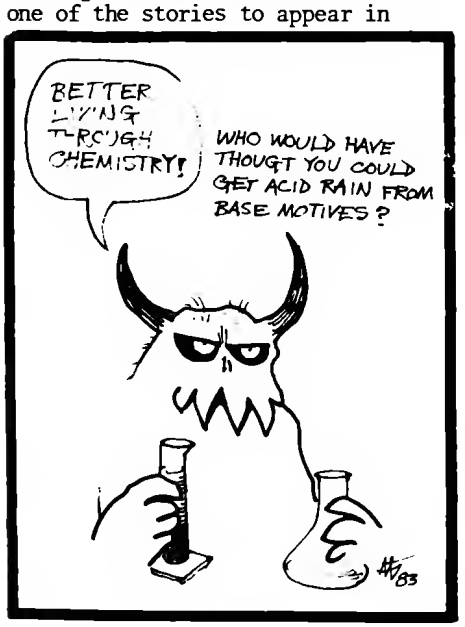
I'm always a sucker for these kinds of books, wanting to pick and glean all that I can from the history of the science fiction field, be it the fiction itself, or the people and circumstances that brought the stories to reality in the first place. Fred Pohl is becoming quite good at it of late, with his autobiography THE WAY THE FUTURE WAS, and in a more peripheral way, THE WORLDS OF GEORGE O. (Smith) which he edited, but in which the late George Smith fills in his own history of his SF career with revealing anecdotes and true stories of his dealings with editors and publishers. I love it all.

And now we have a big, thick trade paperback jam-packed with thirty-four stories spanning, as the title denotes, forty years in the editorial life of one of the most respected, prestigious, talented professionals in the history of the genre. YESTERDAY'S TOMORROWS begins with a short section devoted to Fred's very early years in The Fanzines: 1933-1939, then

travels forward into The Pulps: 1939-1943, with classic stories from Blish, Brackett, Heinlein, Asimov, Bob Tucker and Ross Rocklynne.

Next is a hundred pages of stories Fred saw published in various anthologies he edited or ghost edited as the case may be (Did you know that Robert Heinlein's reprint anthology TOMORROW, THE STARS was actually edited by Fred and Judith Merrill?), including Clarke's "The Nine Billion Names of God," "The Embassy" by Donald A. Wollheim (writing under one of his several pennames of Martin Pearson), and "Eco-Catastrophe!" by Paul Ehrlich. There are others both obscure and classic, but it is to be understood that each of these stories is a part of Pohl's personal as well as professional past, and are not necessarily to be taken each as great gems of literature. In some cases Fred's anecdotes about the stories are more interesting than the stories themselves.

The meat of the book is taken up with The GALAXY and IF years: 1960-1969, and in roughly 200 pages Pohl struts before us the likes of Silverberg, Dick, Kornbluth, Lafferty, Niven, Vance, Tiptree, Jr., Zelazny, Sheckley, Reynolds, Laumer, the incomparable Cordwainer Smith, Bixby, Saberhagen and Goldin, in many peices younger readers are sure to have heard of ... or maybe not. But one thing is a certainty: The deal Pohl made with Robert Silverberg in 1963, when Silverberg wanted to return to SF writing again, has to to be, to this day, one of the riskiest enterprises (if not large, on an economical scale) ever undertaken on faith by a magazine editor. Silverberg's "The Pain Peddlers" was one of the stories to appear in GALAXY while this "deal" was in effect.



Last, but not least, is the chapter on The Paperbacks: 1971-1978, when Fred was, among other things, SF editorial consultant to Bantam Books. Here are excerpts from Delany's controversial DHALGREN, which no other editor would touch, David Kyle's revival of E. E. "Doc" Smith's immortal Lensman series, DRAGON LENSMAN, Gustav Hasford's THE SHORT-TIMERS, and in its entirety, of course, Harlan Ellison's short story "At the Mouse Circus."

To run through the usual gamut of superlatives seems not to be enough here. This book is simply a fictional and non-fictional feast with more than enough for anyone's particular taste. YESTERDAY'S TOMORROWS is a rare book edited by a rare individual.

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STORM SEASON

Edited by Robert Asprin
Ace Books, 305 pp., $2.95

REVIEWED BY ROBERT SABELLA

This is the fourth volume in the Thieves' World series. As in previous volumes, the stories are serious heroic fantasy, concerned more with characterizations and plot development than Conanization and page after page of mindless slaughter. The book's major flaw is that some stories are so carefully written their pace suffers. Still, contributors such as C.J. Cherryh, Andy Offutt and Lynn Abbey keep the quality quite high throughout.

This book is part of a continuing effort by its authors as well as the likes of Jessica Amanda Salmonson and Fritz Leiber to modernize heroic fantasy from the pap that Robert Howard created fifty years ago. For me, at least, they have succeeded. I recommend the entire series highly.

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THE MONSTER OF THE PROPHECY

By Clark Ashton Smith
Timescape Pocket Fantasy, $2.95

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

This is the third in the Timescape releases of Clark Ashton Smith's short stories and features several repeats from the Del Rey Adult Fantasy ZOTHIQUE. Otherwise, the rest of the potpourri is a mix of fantasy and science fiction which should please all CAS fans. "Monsters in the Night" is a very short tail-twisting gem which is timeless in its mode whilst the science fiction stories concerning Mars and Venus are certainly dated, given what we now know concerning the physical conditions of these planets, but are fun reading just the same -- willing suspension-of-belief type thing. Good addition to your CAS collection.

****

FIRST BORN

By Caroline Thompson
Coward-McCann, Inc., New York
192 pp., Hardback, 1983, $13.95
ISBN: 0-698-11224-5

REVIEWED BY PAULETTE MINARE'

A highly controversial topic is skillfully treated in this gripping portrayal of Claire Nash's emotions when she reluctantly makes the secret decision to abort her first pregnancy so that she can continue her secretarial work while her husband, Edward, finishes law school.

Through the power of 26-year-old Caroline Thompson's graphic writing in this, her first novel, you experience Claire's mental agonies with her as she struggles with ambivalence. Claire is afraid to approach Edward with any discussion of abortion since he had talked about it when the Supreme Court handed down their decision, saying that an abortion would show she no longer cared, by killing the fruits of their love, and it would also diminish his love for her.

Yet she has already encountered his dismay when he learns of her pregnancy at a low point in their prosperity. On page 36 Claire analyzes her new status:

> "If only you knew, little baby, what disturbances you're causing. But there you float in fetal oblivion, using me. I feel sick all the time. A queasiness. I'm not accustomed to you. I've never been a house before, or a cow. Or a machine."

She wants the baby and fantasizes about it, but conversely tells herself a fetus has no more life than a plant, it's only a mass of tissue ... (Page 43)

"It's nothing more than action and reaction, intake and expulsion. It has no consciousness. It's not alive. An abortion disposes of potential life, not life itself."

Claire's actual abortion is word-painted; her fear and pain, the frightful sucking sound of the vacuum-cleaner-like machine, and then it is over. Horror and guilt seize her when she sees the aborted 12-week-old fetus in the bottle: "The eye spots moved, looking for something, ... until they found me." (page 50)

Three years later, their son, Neddy, is born. When he is 3 1/2, the story takes on occult overtones. Unexplained sounds and odors cause Claire to call the exterminators. Claire is an overprotective mother until she unaccountably begins to show neglect. Eventually, Claire has a grotesque secret (alien?) resident on the third floor. Credibility is successfully managed by references to case histories.

How this secret is kept and how it affects Claire's sanity and her life with her family, builds suspense and retains your unflagging interest until the unforgettable climax.

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DREAMRIDER

By Sandra Miesel
Ace Books, 15679-7
279 pp., $2.75

REVIEWED BY PAUL MC GUIRE

This work falls into three sections, each being close to exactly one-third of the whole. They are initiation, training and mission. The novel takes place primarily in two worlds, Ria's homeworld and that of her mentors. One of the few flaws in this fine professional work is the uneasy balance between these two, in some ways one representing the traditional ambiance of science fiction, and the other fantasy (although it is also SF).

Ria is a citizen of the near future and is plagued by dreams we soon realize are visitations to alternate Earths. No matter how fantastic, mysterious or even frightening this is, she still has to do the dishes, clean her apartment and either go to work or think of a good excuse not to -- and this is all more important for her than it would be for us since in her world appearances are imperative.

Through unobtrusive detail and what must have been massive behind-the-scenes work, Ms. Miesel creates a vibrant, textured and disturbingly believable future where no one is allowed to stray from a rigidly defined norm. It is totalitarian state where one must in all ways be one with the majority.

Although Ms. Miesel enters no one's head other than Ria, Ria enters several bodies, carrying us along.

Her testing over, two shamen of one future, an old woman and an otter of human size and intelligence, begin training her to join their ranks. Progress towards self-discovery is not linear. Ria falters, makes mistakes, but always continues -- and always rings true as a person.

For me, one extended visit by Ria to the otter society dragged, since it seemed an unnecessary timeout from the story. Someone else may consider it their favorite section since it gives a good look at that society, this time by simple question and answer.

The final third of the novel most clearly reveals the grinning skull behind the happy face of Ria's homeworld. Her mission to change its self-defeating course becomes a personal test of her new power when the authorities call her in for interrogation.

Although only intermittently compelling, the book is quite good, with a more-than-competent rendition of a sound idea, excellent development of character and mature story-telling ability. I look forward to Sandra Miesel's next novel, which may well deserve a rave.

By the way, DREAMRIDER appears to be the first of a series, but how often nowadays do you ever see a science fiction novel which isn't part of a series?

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STORM SEASON

Edited by Robert Asprin
Ace Fantasy, 305 pp., $2.95

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

Another book for Sanctuary afictionados. Shadowspawn, One-Thumb, Hakim the Story-teller, Jubal Slavetrader, Tempus the Hellhound and many more are again put through their paces in the face of an impending invasion of Sanctuary. The action is a tad bit slower and the intrigues and conversations a bit more convoluted but recommended just the same. (What ever happened to Enas Yorl?)

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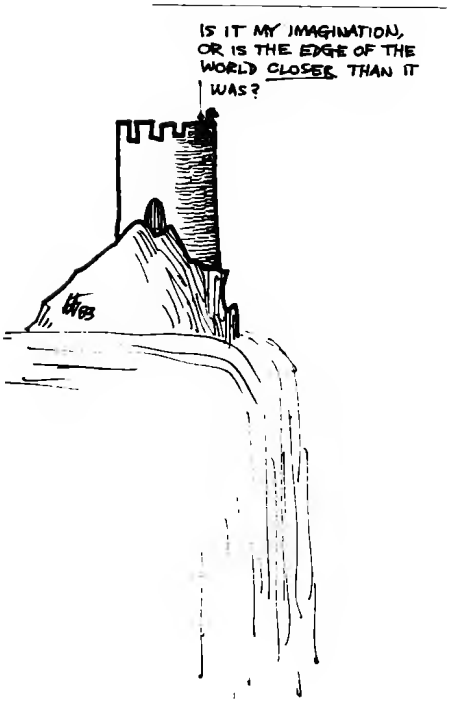

THE BOOK OF RUNES

By Ralph Blum
St. Martin's Press, Sept, 1983
127 pp., 5 X 7" hardcover, plus set of 25 ceramic Runestones, in drawstring bag, $19.95 per set.

REVIEWED BY PAULETTE MINARE'

THE BOOK OF RUNES is reminiscent of I CHING, but seems much quicker and easier to interpret. Sometimes called "psychic pet rocks," their use taps one's own subconscious knowledge to serve as a daily guide.

The 25 Viking Runes are based on an ancient alphabet, credited with occult powers in the North. Inscribed on 25 ceramic tiles, they are drawn from the bag and then interpreted according to the explanation of each symbol in THE BOOK OF RUNES.

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THE BEST SCIENCE FICTION OF THE YEAR #11

Edited by Terry Carr
Timescape Books, 435 pp., $3.95

REVIEWED BY ROBERT SABELLA

No Best-of-the-Year volume can possibly contain all the best science fiction stories of any given year, but Terry Carr's annual anthology has such a high average quality that it is mandatory reading for any devotee of short science fiction. This has been true since Terry Carr began

the series with Donald Wollheim nearly twenty years ago. So long as he retains his enthusiasm for the task there is every reason to expect it will continue.

It is becoming cliche to say the best story in this volume is by John Varley. His considerable talents continue to grow. Six years ago his forte' was creative view of the future and sense of wonder. Now he is also strong at characterization and providing food for thought. At his current rate of growth he is on the verge of becoming the yardstick against which all science fiction writers will be measured. "The Pusher" is about the loneliness of working in deep space. Visits to Earth are only possible every few months subjective time only to find that thirty years have passed objective time. Think what would happen to family and friends during such a long absence. The story is a deliberate tease because you expect one development only to be zapped by a different tact entirely. Yet it turns out so fitting you can only nod your head in agreement. If this is not the best short story of the year, I would love to read a better one.

Gene Wolfe's "The Woman the Unicorn Loved" begins as a warm, gentle story about a genetically-engineered unicorn. Wolfe is too dissecting to stop at that though. It evolves into a grim warning that in the realistic world -- which is where all Wolfe's stories reside no matter how fantastic their premise -- things are seldom what they seem. Every so often we must all be reminded of that truism.

Two promising newcomers are Michael Swanwick and Pat Cadigan. Both have easy, conversational reading styles that often take the place of talent in new writers -- several John W. Campbell Awards have proven that. Happily, both these writers have something to say. Cadigan's "Second Comings -- Reasonable Rates" begins as bitter satire and winds up as a chilling scenario. Swanwick's "Walden Three" postulates that top-notch comedians may actually be the best manipulators of public opinion, then illustrates how effective these people could actually be. A thoughtful story whether you agree with his politics or not.

Ed Bryant's "The Thermals of August" is his best story in several years. It combines the beauty and splendor of a new art form -- human kites -- with the strange fascination of those who risk their lives participating. This story has perhaps too strong an appeal to the emotions but it is effective nevertheless.

Poul Anderson has been one of the steadiest writers in science fiction for many years. He has been so steady that people tend to overlook how his stories have become quite sophisticated with strong characterization and a more than adequate writing style. "The Saturn Game" is one of his better stories. It concerns space explorers who engage in imaginary fantasy games to pass their time in space -- sort of the logical companion to Varley's "The Pusher" -- and the danger of their becoming too attached to the game to get them through the long, lonely days. This was a deserving award-winner.

There are eleven other stories. While I would argue over the inclusion of several, all are at least good stories while several push the above-mentioned stories in quality. As usual, this volume is highly recommended.

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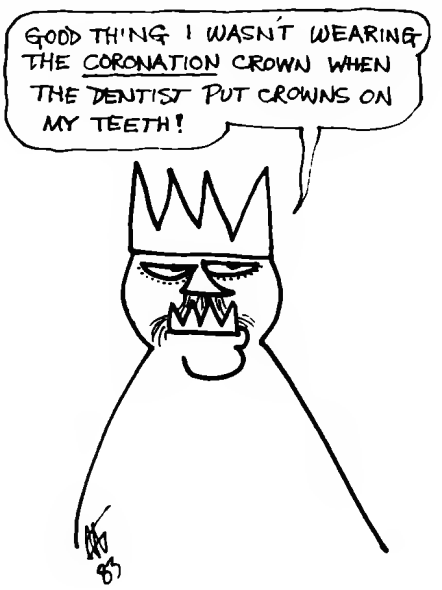

RIVER OF DEATH
By Alistair MacLean
Doubleday, 179 pp., $14.95

REVIEWED BY PAUL MCGUIRE

Although a rendition of the pulp sytle via RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, and reminiscent of lost-race jungle adventures of Haggard and Burroughs, (as well as TERRY AND THE PIRATES and Mr. MacLean's spy thrillers), RIVER OF DEATH does stay just this side of overt fantasy. If magic is absolutely necessary for one to enjoy a rip-roaring, gritty adventure, that one should skip this novel. For anyone else, and for what the book wants to be, it is a good read.

A group of adventurers, none of whom are dumb enough to trust each other, travel into unexplored areas of the Amazon. They are as great a danger to themselves as the river and its cannibals. Deception and betrayal, Nazi gold, everyone playing a part for secret reasons, all lead to the ancient hidden city of a lost race.

It has all been done before, and done better, but unlike most mainstream writers who stray upriver into our territory, Mr. MacLean knows where he wants to go and how to get there.

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THE BEST OF TREK #5
Edited by Irwin and Love
Signet, $2.75

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

Another potpourri of Star Trek articles from TREK. What a disappointment, though -- no pictures like those in TREK #4. This one includes a learned genetic treatise on Spock and DNA recombination; the music of Star Trek; a small parody and the solutions to such mysteries such as why Kirk never fell down an empty turbo-life shaft, the transporting of tons of tribbles to the Klingons, how Uhura can have such beautiful long nails and still efficiently push her communications buttons (tough nail polish) etc. Recommended for the fan who doesn't subscribe to TREK.

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THE GATES OF EDEN
By Brian Stableford
DAW, 1983, $2.95

REVIEWED BY GARTH SPENCER

Leander Caretta, a "paratellurian" biologist working in the 25th century at Sule, one of Space Agency's research stations in the Solar System, volunteers to join the mission to explore Earth Three, the second habitable planet -- and apparently, the first uninhabited one -- to be discovered in three centuries. He has just one problem: periodic blackouts and recurring nightmares.

The new planet, named Naxos, was discovered by the Ariadne, a slowboat carrying a crew in suspended animation. Naxos looks green and habitable, even more stable than Earth. There's just one problem: The whole research team on the ground up and died for no apparent reason.

Leander's adventures with his uncertain crewmates, his battle with his own mind, and his unlock-

ing the mystery of Naxos all come together in a logical climax.

Stableford's latest novel continues his tradition of logical exobiological speculation, human drama and dry appreciation of bureaucratic intrigue. THE GATES OF EDEN is a good read.

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THE COMING OF THE DEMONS
By Gwenyth Hood
William Morrow, $13.50

REVIEWED BY G.B. CHAMBERLAIN

To feudal Earth come the space-wandering Pelezitereans -- technically advanced refugees from a planet destroyed by civil war. Disloyal crewfolk jump ship; a native dies; "the Prime Directive is at stake." To prevent further meddling with a weaker culture, a leading party goes in, packing 2-way wrist computers and stun-or-kill sidearms.

Within a week, its commander has learned the language and taken sides in politics. An emotionally deprived 17-year-old, she shoots straight, rides hard and runs a tight ship; her sick, inbred 22-year-old fiance' beds and weds a blonde native princess.

Noble captives are freed from durance vile; a rightful heir is restored; and after a couple of flying-saucer dogfights with energy beams, the mad scientist and his sidekick (the commander's depraved twin sister) get away to provide incentive for a sequel. A trilogy is promised.

Is this the weak flip-side of an old Ace Double? Thirties space opera, reprinted as cheap filler in AMAZING? Left-over scenarios for the mothballed BATTLESTAR GALACTICA? No, a first novel by a Wellesley Phi Beta with an MA in comp. lit -- and to borrow from James Blish (F&SF, August, 1970), "almost the standard product of the mainstream writer who tries to write SF without apparently, ever having read any, and without obviously, any knowledge whatsoever of any science."

The setting is Italy in AD 1268; the good guys' local ally is Conradin, last of the Hohenstaufen, whose historical execution they interrupt. Since the Pelezitereans have evidently been hurled backwards in time from a future "Urith," the precise subgenre is not aliens-among-us or Earth-as-UDC, but changing-the-past and alternate history. But rest easy, Ward Moore; if BRING THE JUBILEE was a 10, this novel is a courtesy two.

Inside a bad book there is sometimes a good one struggling to get out. The author's medieval background is impressive and she may have something to say about generation conflict, child-rearing practices and the human need for empathy. But THE COMING OF THE DEMONS is too talky for historical romance, too preachy-teachy for character study, not punchy enough for space opera, and a generation or two behind the times as mainstream SF.

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PEOPLE OF DARKNESS
By Tony Hillerman
Avon, 57778, 191 pp., $2.25

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

On one hand, the book is of mystery genre, but on the other hand, it combines Navaho folklore with uranium hunting, the primitive with the sophisticated. The result is death, and Sergeant Jim Chee of the Navaho Tribal Police is called upon to solve a death 40 years removed. It begins with the call of Rosemary Vines, wife of wealthy B.J. Vines, concerning the burglary of a box of her husband's keepsakes by the People of Darkness, and snowballs through the peyote users of the Native American Church, Navaho witches, dead Navahos connected with an oil drilling venture who have all died of cancer (very statistically significant), a vengeful Sheriff who's brother was killed by this same oil venture, a hired assassin, wild chases through the beautiful wild deadly Navaho reservation and the surprise denouement. Highly recommended.

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STEPHEN KING'S CREEPSHOW
(A George A. Romero Film)
Art by Berni Wrightson
Cover Art by Jack Kamen
New American Library, 1982
(A Plume Book)

REVIEWED BY JOHN DIPRETE

Most horror mag fans know the style of story and art found in VAMPIRELLA and CREEPY; well, CREEPSHOW is a Warren-type magazine brought to life in quality color and classy covers. The most eye-catching difference, however, outweighing the color and the covers (even the general length is similar to CREEPY, EERIE, etc.) is the price tag: $6.95 for the fears and chills.

This book bills itself as the first in a series of mag-type books, so again we notice the classic horror mag status that CREEPSHOW is aiming for; its mascot, an Uncle Creepy look-alike, frames each piece in a droll caricature of comic relief. The lengths of the stories stretch on for a bit longer, averaging ten pages or so, and use a tad more adult language. Essentially, the quality and style epitomize the Warren brand (although this is not a Warren mag); most of the stories do set the flesh a-crawling. Period. The most earth-shaking difference (discounting price) is the full color art by Berni Wrightson, who almost recapitulates his SWAMP THING level in these pages. The most irksome feature: The title is STEPHEN KING'S CREEPSHOW, based on King's screenplay for that movie, but no actual credits refer to the strip dialogue as being King's; one is led to suspect that King penned them verbatim -- but this I doubt. Misleading.

In summary: a good CREEPY look-alike in full color -- at more'n thrice the price.

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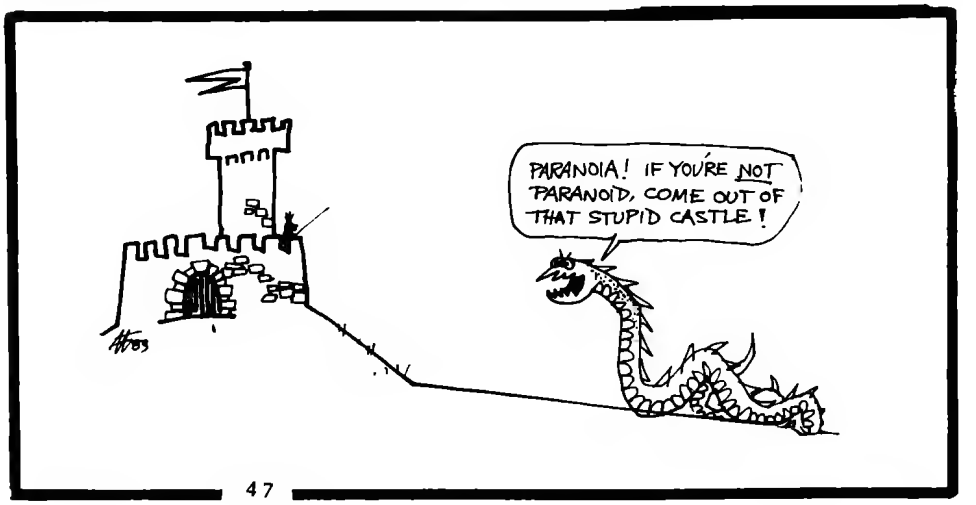

HAWKMISTRESS

By Marion Zimmer Bradley
DAW, UE1762; Cover Art and Frontispiece by Hannah M.G. Shapero;
336 pp., $2.95

REVIEWED BY PAUL MC GUIRE

With publication in 1962 of THE SWORD OF ALDONES, Marion Zimmer Bradley began a series which has become popular enough to have spawned its own fandom within fandom. The series is about a planet called Darkover. (A prototype Darkover novel, THE DOOR THROUGH SPACE, was published in 1961). Darkover is a harsh, cold world settled by crashed colonists from Earth. In the millennium following that event, the Darkovans forgot Earth, and psi powers had been developed, flourished and started dying out. In the Towers, psi powers were augmented by huge matrix stones to develop a non-mechanical technology. By the time of the series, Earth had discovered the planet and the series told of the intrigues surrounding the contact between the two types of humans and their radically different cultures, Darkovans' desire to stay independent and retain traditions, and the Comyn's contested rule. The scope and depth of the series increased to such an extent that certain key episodes written early had become weak by comparison. In 1979, Ms. Bradley greatly expanded the 1964 novel, THE BLOODY SUN. In 1981, she totally rewrote the original novel (... ALDONIS), the new version published as SHARRA'S EXILE.

In the course of this saga, much had been revealed about the planet's past ages prior to Earth's discovery of the lost colonists. Much of that past had been a time of uncontrolled matrix forces and warring kingdoms. Interest in those ages increased to a point where Ms. Bradley wrote a novel set in the ancient Darkover, STORMQUEEN (1976), and in 1980, a second novel, TWO TO CONQUER, followed. Now, set chronologically between those two, we have HAWKMISTRESS. (Generated by Darkover fandom, two anthologies containing stories set in all of the planet's major historical periods are also in print.) In 1972 the story of the first humans to crash on the planet was published with the punny title, DARKOVER LANDFALL.

Much of what is associated with Darkover, particularly matrix lore, is overlooked in HAWKMISTRESS. Instead it begins with more generally traditional themes: a human who has rapport with animals, a young woman pretending to be a boy while she runs away from an undesirable marriage, and a dispossessed king living the life of an outlaw.

For a girl of Romilly's spirit and nature, being compelled to the indoors sewing and bearing children would be bad enough, but she also has one of the psi powers called laran. Her gift is a telepathic-like rapport for animals, especially hawks and horses. Romilly is very young, in some ways naive and intolerant. Even while bemoaning the unfairness of herself being forced into a female stereotype, she can feel contempt for her brother's poor ability to adapt to his male stereotype. But she is willing and able to learn. Grow and learn she must, since she is soon on her own and off adventuring.

One of the most fantastic elements of the novel is that every man Romilly meets is either brutal, a rapist or homosexual. After that incredible run of ill luck, it is with understandable relief she embraces the Amazon-like Sisterhood of the Sword in the third, and best, section of the book. As one of them, Romilly becomes Hawkmistress to the exiled king who has raised an army to fight to regain his throne.

HAWKMISTRESS is a completely independent novel and thus no familiarity with Darkover or the other books in the series is needed to understand and enjoy it. Neither as original or science fictional as the rest of the series (in fact, until one nears the end, it reads far more like historical fiction than SF or F), nonetheless, HAWKMISTRESS is very well done, particularly in its superb development of Romilly's character.

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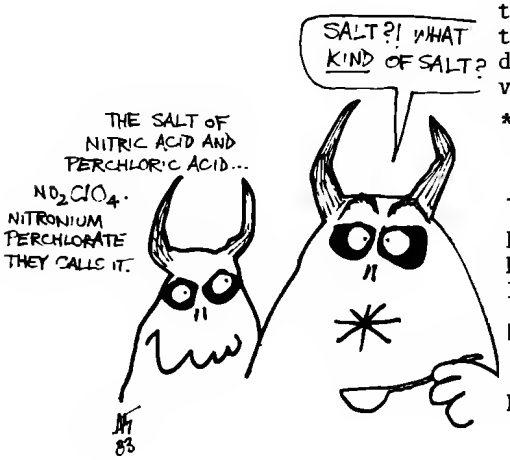

THE TWILIGHT ZONE COMPANION

By Marc Scott Zicree
Bantam Books
1982, 447 pp., $9.95

REVIEWED BY JOHN DIPRETE

Everyone has heard of the ZONE. Everyone has heard of Rod Serling. Everyone has watched, or is watching, or will watch the vast horde of reruns, still appearing with gusto twenty years after TZ's death. The show, of course, was -- to put it tritely -- a phenomenon. Serling, himself, the humanist/philosopher/poet, author of such classics as PATTERNS and REQUIEM FOR A HEAVYWEIGHT, was a non-stop creative fireball. TWILIGHT ZONE reflected his deep, daring scuffle with human attitudes. Its polish and class can be glimpsed by the dozens of series stars who later became top-rung giants. The dialogue was the best in television -- always tailored for a crisp delivery; fresh, clear and durable.

There is a "complete show-by-show guide" to the TWILIGHT ZONE series. A complete summing-up of each episode, with cast and production credits, black-and-white photographs in sharp relief, and the most important feature -- Serling's opening and closing remarks, verbatim, in italics. For regular TWILIGHT ZONE MAGAZINE readers, this collection is basically the same episode guide, in expanded form, compiled by Marc Scott Zicree for that periodical. This book contains all of his work in one place. Extra material has been included.

THE TWILIGHT ZONE COMPANION mirrors the nostalgia and finely-etched drama of the ZONE with serious, non-gushing scholarship. If you enjoyed the series, you'll respect Zicree's tribute.

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THE RESTAURANT AT THE END OF THE UNIVERSE

By Douglas Adams
Pan, 187 pp., $3.25

LIFE, THE UNIVERSE AND EVERYTHING

By Douglas Adams
Pan, $4.50

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

The sequel to RESTAURANT. Our separated and stranded travelers are picked up by Slartibartfast and whisked around to prevent the End of the Universe as We Know It, by interfering in the affairs of the ostrasized planet, Krikkit.

Come and be reunited with our intrepid friends, Arthur Dent, Ford Prefect, Trillian, Zaphod Beeblebrox and Marvin, the paranoid android as they traverse the Universe in their improbable ship, Heart of Gold and fall into impossible situations with

incredible solutions. Recommended to anyone with a perverted and eccentric sense of humor.

****

NIFFT THE LEAN

By Michael Shea
DAW Books, $2.95

REVIEWED BY ROBERT SABELLA

This book is a serious attempt at heroic fantasy which retains as much color and bravado as possible. It is semi-logically plotted and involves characters who are only slightly larger-than-life (unlike the Conan imitations who are so super-heroic as to be totally unbelievable).

Nifft is a mercenary who deals with everything from underworld demons to vampire queens. He is both clever and humorous, two prerequisites for such a profession. Unfortunately, Shea tends to overwrite. While the adventures are sprightly enough, the storyline often crawls.

****

UNIVERSE 13

Edited by Terry Carr
Doubleday, 1983, 181 pp., $11.95

REVIEWED BY ANDREW ANDREWS

To be honest, I may recommend two stories in the UNIVERSE 13 "original" collection of short stories: "Her Habiline Husband" by Michael Bishop and "Stone Eggs" by Kim Stanley Robinson. Themes done to a new twist, but nothing to turn you around.

The stories are clean, sharp, professional. They sing. Here there be tales of psi powers, of dinosaurs dislodged in time, of a strange human ancestor walking on our most common ground ... all done respectably, neatly, meaningfully.

But we are being treated to some of the same kind of material I was reading years ago. We are covering Old Ground in this collection.

No daring approaches here, nothing dangerous or unique. The experimentations are with cutesy situations and cutesy characters. Is this supposed to be the best in speculative fiction, or advanced Dick and Jane?

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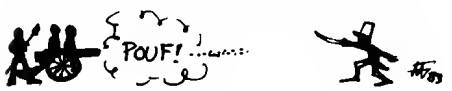

THE MAKING OF STAR TREK II: THE WRATH OF KHAN

By Allen Asherman
Pocket Science Fiction
Illustrated, $7.95

REVIEWED BY ALMA JO WILLIAMS

Well-written book with interviews by the leading stars, director, etc., together with their previous film and TV credits. (Ricardo Mantalban has the most.) Makes clear the multiple literary references to TALE OF TWO CITIES, MOBY DICK (Khan's quote of Ahab's hate speech to the whale is thrown at Kirk just before Genesis explodes) and PETER PAN. Missing are the Lewis Carroll references to "The Hunting of the Snark" which adorn the book version. Another addition for the shelves of ST fans and movie buffs.

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THE LAZARUS EFFECT

By Frank Herbert & Bill Ransom
Putnam's, 1983, 381 pp., $15.95

REVIEWED BY STUART NAPIER

Frank Herbert and Bil Ransom's latest collaboration, THE LAZARUS EFFECT, is a sequel to their previous lackluster effort, THE JESUS INCIDENT and suffers under the burden of continuing an already overextended idea.

Herbert, author of many science fiction novels, first exhibited this tendency to milk an idea for more than it was worth with CHILDREN OF DUNE, third in what ultimately turned out to be four books based on the rich details found in the original 1965 best-seller DUNE. Impressive though his world-building is, at times the details get in the way of solid character and coherent plot. Such is the case with THE LAZARUS EFFECT.

The story begins in the far distant future, approximately 300 years after the conclusion of the first novel. Through backfill, we learn that humans were abandoned on the planet Pandora by a star-ship run by a computer with a God complex. Ship's command, "You must decide how to WorShip me" formed the basis of their religion.

Pandora is hostile, nearly all sea environment when the humans arrive. Soon the only sentient life form -- kelp -- is destroyed and the remaining land masses give in to the relentless ocean. Having dispensed with the competition, the humans now start in on each other.

The basic plot -- like most of Herbert's works, there are several sub-plots -- is that of a subtle struggle between the two cultures that have evolved on the planet. These are the Mermen, almost normal humans who live under the sea and possess a high level of technology and the Islanders, who live on floating islands of "organics" at the mercy of the ocean currents and who are a collection of mutants from the earlier clone experiments conducted by the brilliant, but mad, bio-engineer, Jesus Lewis.

Interwoven into all this is Vata, the mysterious, living "icon" of the WorShip religion and her child-mate, Duque.

A series of convenient events -- a little too conveniently, for most readers, I would guess -- brings the story to an ending of sorts. The kelp have regained sentience and Avata, their name for kelp group consciousness, takes control. Pandora has now gone full cycle. Or has it? In the final chapter we find Vata and Duque listening in on a conversation between a deceased Islander, now part of the genetic memory of Avata -- thus the Lazarus effect -- debating over its "editing" of him. "I can only improve myself," he says. Comments Duque, "You see? We care who forces our dreams on us."

A trilogy to come? Let's hope not.

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THE ARCHIVES

THE ARCHIVES RECORD RECENT SCIENCE FICTION AND FANTASY RELEASES, SOMETIMES WITH ACCOMPANYING COMMENTARY OR RELEVANT INFORMATION.

THE ARCHIVES IS A DATA BASE AND MAY SAVE THE READER MONEY AND TIME IN DECIDING WHAT TO BUY...AND WHAT NOT TO BUY.

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THE STAR WARS INTERGALACTIC PASSPORT
BALLANTINE, $2.50, August, 1983.
Clever, convincing bit of science fiction future artifact. May be worth $$ as a collectible in 50 years.

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LIFE, THE UNIVERSE AND EVERYTHING
By Douglas Adams
POCKET, $3.50, October 1983.
The concluding (novel?) of the Hitchhiker's Trilogy.
Weird, man, weird!

TIME PATROLMAN By Poul Anderson
Tor, $2.95, October, 1983.
New SF novel.
'TO DEFEND THE PAST...that is the job of The Time Patrol. No matter how good or evil an event, it must be held inviolate. Should a Patrolman fail in his trust then Time becomes Chaos, and all that has been or can ever be shall tumble into Darkness. That is why the greatest grief a Time Patrolman can know is to love one of those he is sworn to protect, for no matter how hideous her doom, he may not lift a hand to save her.
'Such is the Sorrow of Odin the Goth.'

ON A PALE HORSE By Piers Anthony
Del Rey, $12.95, October, 1983.
New Fantasy novel: Book One of Incarnations of Immortality.
'In Zane's world, the revolution of science had been joined by the revolution of magic. The Incarnations---Time, War, Nature, Fate and Death---were living beings with immense power over the affairs of men. And the war of Satan against God was real and evident.
'Zane, cheated of his chance for romance and wealth, attempted suicide---only to find himself suddenly thrust into the role and given the powers of Death. At his will, death came to men to end suffering or destroy hope. And he alone could free and judge the souls of those in balance between good and evil.
'Then Zane discovered he was being drawn inescapably into an evil plot of Satan's...and at stake was the life of the woman he was beginning to love.'

BIO OF A SPACE TYRANT---
VOLUME ONE: REFUGEE
By Piers Anthony
Avon, $2.95, October, 1983.
New SF novel; first of five in this saga.
'Though he was later accused of every crime and sexual perversion in the galaxy, Hope Hubris began as an innocent. Because he defended his older sister agsinst the violent lusts of a wealthy scion, Hope and his peasant family were forced to flee Callisto, one of the moons of Jupiter. Pursued by bloodthirsty scions across the airless desert, they barely escapes with their lives. The illegal space bubble was overcrowded with refugees, all hoping to reach Jupiter for asylum.
'But the space travelers had not reckoned with the terrible threat of high space---the pirates, barbaric men who rape, rob and murder with no thought but to satisfy their bestial appetites. It will take all Hope's ingenuity to survive, but the atrosities he witnesses will never die. There is only one way he can be rid of them...REVENGE!'
I think only Piers could get away with a name like Hope Hubris, now. Arnold Toynbee must be smiling in his grave.
This story is told in the first person--by Hope Hubris in a kind of diary---and is very effective.
Piers Anthony isn't a fancy writer, but he sure as hell gets the job done!

DRAGON ON A PEDESTAL
By Piers Anthony
DEL REY, $2.95, October, 1983.
New Fantasy novel: the 7th Xanth novel.
'There was trouble in Xanth again...
'The Gap Dragon had escaped from the Gap and was ravaging across the land. The forget-spell that had covered the Gap was breaking up into

small forget-whorls that wandered about, giving amnesia to all they touched. Good Magician Humfrey might have had the Answer, but he had overdosed on water from the Fountain of Youth and was only a helpless baby.
'And Ivy, three-year-old daughter of King Dor and Queen Irene, was lost in the jungles south of the Gap. While Irene sought her without much hope, Ivy was wandering further into danger, her memories erased by a passing forget-whorl. Her path was leading her directly to where the Gap Dragon was seeking dinner.'

ISAAC ASIMOV PRESENTS THE GREATEST SF STORIES #10 (1948)
Edited by Isaac Asimov and Martin H. Greenberg.
DAW, $3.50, August, 1983.
New SF anthology.
Stories by Henry Kuttner, H. Beam Piper, Murray Leinster, Judith Merril, A.E. Van Vogt, Peter Phillips, Ray Bradbury, Martin Gardner, William Tenn, John D. MacDonald, J.J. Coupling, Wilmar H. Shiras, Fredric Brown, Eric Frank Russell.

NORBY, THE MIXED-UP ROBOT
By Janet and Isaac Asimov
WALKER, $9.95, September, 1983.
New SF Juvenile (ages 9-12).

'A teaching robot seems the only answer to Jeff Wells' problems at the Space Academy. But his limited funds reduce his choice to second-hand ones. In the robot store he finds an old, broken-down model, which he names "Norby," but the robot's unusual powers complicate matters even more for Jeff.

'Jeff and Norby find themselves involved in the sinister plans of Ing the Ingrate to take over the universe.

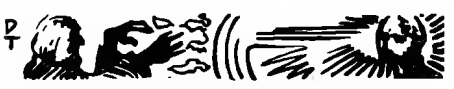
ISAAC ASIMOV'S MAGICAL WORLDS OF FANTASY #1
Edited by Isaac Asimov, Martin S. Greenberg, and Charles G. Waugh.
SIGNET, $3.50, October, 1983.
New Fantasy anthology.

'Jack Vance, Ron Goulart, Larry Niven, L. Sprague de Camp, Ursula K. Le Guin, John Jakes, Greag Bear, Manly Wade Wellman, Theodore Cogswell, Robert E. Howard.

'From Atlantis to California, from the Orient to far-distant worlds, come classic tales of wizardry used for evil and for good. From a sorcerous battle where a warlock's only ally is his werewolf, to demons thirsting for the souls of victims an d masters alike, to Conan the Barbarian in a danger-filled contest with the forces of darkness.'

ISAAC ASIMOV PRESENTS THE GREAT SF STORIES #10 (1948)
Edited by Isaac Asimov and Martin H. Greenberg
DAW, $3.50, August, 1983.
New sf anthology. Sixteen of the best stories from 1948.

"Don't Look Now" by Henry Kutner
"He Walked Around the Horses" by H. Beam Piper.
"The Strange Case of John Kingman" By Murray Leinster.
"That Only a Mother" by Judith Merril.
"The Monster" by A. E. Van Vogt.
"Dreams Are Sacred" by Peter Phillips.
"Mars is Heaven" by Ray Bradbury.
"Thang" by Martin Gardner.
"Brooklyn Project" by William Tenn.
"Ring Around the Redhead" by John D. MacDonald.
"Period Piece" by J.J. Coupling.
"Dormant" by A. E. Van Vogt.
"In Hiding" by Wilmar H. Shiras.
"Knock" by Fredric Brown.
"A Child is Crying" by John D. MacDonald.
"Late Night Final" by Eric Frank Russell.



ISAAC ASIMOV READS HIS THE ROBOTS OF DAWN - A Lije Bailey Novel.
"A Portrait of Gladia"
CAEDMON TC1732, $8.98, September 1983.
LP Recording

In this section of his new novel, THE ROBOTS OF DAWN, Isaac Asimov, with zest and relish, reads his words ---the encounter between human, Earthling detective Lije Bailey, and Spacer women Gladia who is in love with him and whose humanform robot has been killed. Gladia speaks extensively of her change from an isolated, sex-repelled Solarian to a citizen of the planet Aurora, where sex is casual, easy, routine, and where she began having---for the first time in her life---orgasms during lovemaking with her obedient, advanced, humanform robot.

My, my, how sf has changed!

THE FACE OF CHAOS
Edited by Robert Lynn Asprin and Lynn Abbey.
Ace, $2.95, October, 1983. New.
5th Thieves' World anthology.
Stories this time by:
Robert Lynn Asprin,
Lynn Abbey,
C.J. Cherryh,
David Drake,
Diana L. Paxson,
and Janet Morris.
Previous anthologies about the Thieves' World are:
#1--THIEVES' WORLD
#2--TALES FROM THE VULGAR UNICORN
#3--SHADOWS OF SACTUARY
#4--STORM SEASON

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THE EMPEROR OF ERIDANUS
By Pierre Barbet
DAW, $2.25, September, 1983.
New SF novel.

'The natives of Eridanus had spaced in veterans of Napoleon's Dragoons to save them from warlike invaders...and the Bonapartists had stayed. In fact, they had followed the tenets of the Little Corporal and had raised their own imperial standards over the conquered stars.

'But the path of empire is always uncertain and the untested vagaries of stellar warfare and of imperial intrigues kept the former Captain Bernard on the edge of his new throne.

'Enemies among the advanced races of the Milky Way were gathering and the possibility arose that for this student of Napoleon there might also be a Waterloo in his stars.'

A novel likley to fascinate history buffs and war-gamers.

THE ZEN GUN By Barrington J. Bayley
DAW, $2.50, August, 1983.
New sf novel.
'A novel about:
The absolutely ultimate weapon that can ever exist... The sub-human who found it and tried to use it... The beasts who manned humanity's last star fleet... The widening rip in the space-time continuum... The brief cosmic empire of the pigs... The theory of gravitational recession... The super-samurai who served the zen-gunner... The colonial girl who defied the galactic empire ... And many more.'

THE QUINCUNX OF TIME By James Blish
Avon, $2.50, October 1983; first published in 1953. It is an expanded version of "Beep" first published in GALAXY.
SF novel.

'In the far, far future, travel at light speeds is common, and Earth is first in the universe, reigning over many worlds.

'But in order to rule effectively, Captain Robin Weinbaum, head of Security, needed an extremely advanced communications system. He got it with the Dirac transmitter, the first machine capable of sending instantaneous messages anywhere in the universe.

'The only problem was that someone called J. Shelby Stevens had a machine that could do the impossible ---tap the transmissions before they were even made! It was Weinbaum's job to find Stevens. And unless he did, time would be abolished and the universe closed to Earth forever!'

A fine, revealing, intriguing Introduction by Brian Aldiss and A Critical Preface by Blish virtually compell the reader to continue on and read this short novel of i-d-e-a-s.

THE NIGHT SHAPES By James Blish
Avon, $2.50, September, 1983. First published in 1962.

'Ktendi, the Sorcerer King, is forced to lead a band of enemies into the deadliest part of the jungle, filled with savage n atives and mysterious demons.

'It is a journey fraught with danger and horrifying death. Ktendi must do battle with the frightening witch-priestess, weilder of strange powers and stranger charms.

'In an odyssey of such peril, with death only one step behind, Ktendi may never escape. And, if he does, will he ever be able to speak of the unspeakable?'

GREMLINS GO HOME
By Ben Bova & Gordon R. Dickson
First paperbk pub., Nov. '83, Tor
SF novel, $2.75

'Several hundred years ago a band of explorers were marooned on Planet Earth. Alas, the Little People are not strong on gadgetry and they have had to while away the centuries of their youth, living for the day when they could get off this god-forsaken mudball ...At last, the time has come. All they need now is a human -- a young one will do -- to help them hijack a Shuttle to take them to where rescue awaits...What All-American boy could resist giving a hand to a friendly leprechaun?'

THE SWORD AND THE SATCHEL
By Elizabeth Boyer
DEL REY, $2.95, August 1983; first edition May, 1980.
Fantasy novel.

'Kilgore had long dreamed of great adventures and magic. But when he alone proved a-le to draw the magic sword Kildurin, he found himself embroiled in more than he had wanted. With the aid of a crochety old wizard, he set out for the far north across lands beset with trolls, frost giants, dark elves, and all the minions of dark sorcery. It was his duty to find and destroy the evil wizard Surt, who was threatening to bring never-ending darkness and eternal winter to the land of Skarpsey.

'There was a further problem: There had been twenty previous attempts to end the life of Surt, and all had failed. Surt, it seems, could not be killed!'

THE RUINS OF ISIS
By Marion Zimmer Bradley
Timescape, $3.50, Sept. '83; 3rd printing.

'Alone in the universe, the Matriarchs dominate a world guided by the Builders, whose sacred voices speak only to women.

'When scientists Cendri and Dal come to explore Isis, they sense the perils that could ravage this strange planet. Earthquakes and tidal waves are one danger---but the seething revolt of the men will force Isis to a new beginning---or a cataclysmic end!'

This novel, written in the heyday of the women's liberation movement, gives the male reader a look and a feel of what it's like to be woman in a male dominated society. It's an eye-opener and a must-read. It is also a warning that women in power act just like men in power.

This novel was originally published by Donning/Starblaze and this edition features the original Kelly Freas Starblaze cover.

THENDARA HOUSE
By Marion Zimmer Bradley
DAW, $3.50, September, 1983.
New Darkover novel.

'Thendara House was a place on Darkover where the order of Renunciates dwelled---women, known as Free Amazons, who had renounced all subservience to men, and who sought for themselves total equality in all spheres of society.

'To Thendara House came the Terran Magda in exchange for the Free Amazon Jaelle, who had become the wife of an Earthman and had entered the Terran enclave.

'The cross-currents of two cultures, one male-dominated, one egalitarian, combined with the human problems of the two who had switched allegiances, brings into focus all the deepest questions of love and marriage, of male and female, and of justice and injustice.'

THE COLORS OF SPACE
By Marion Zimmer Bradley
Timescape, $2.95, Sept. 1983. Orig. published in 1963; this edition is unabridged. (I'm not sure if Donning published an unabridged edition.)

'The secret of faster-than-light space travel is jealously guarded by the Lhari, reptilian aliens who kill all invaders.

'Only one man can unravel this mystery, with a new discovery---a color invisible to human eyes. But the hunter becomes the hunted, as the Lhari pursue him into a web of deadly interstellar intrigue!'

STARTIDE RISING By David Brin
Bantam, $3.50, September, 1983.
New SF novel.

'The Terran exploration vessel Streaker has crashed on the uncharted water-world of Kithrup, bearing one of the most important discoveries in galactic history. Above, in space, armadas of alien races clash in a titanic struggle to claim her. Below, a handful of her human and dolphin crew battles armed rebellion and a hostile planet to safeguard her secret---the fate of the Progenitors, the fabled First Race who seeded wisdom throughout the stars.'

A long novel, 352 pages, small type. Solid story structure, good writing.

PLAYERS AT THE GAME OF PEOPLE
By John Brunner
Del Rey, $2.25, Sept. 1983; first published by Del Rey in December, 1980.
SF novel.

'War hero, jet-setter, gourmet ---Godwin Harpinshield was all of these and more; his life was a game played among the Beautiful People whose fame, wealth and power set them above the law, and beyond the laws of nature. Because of a simple bargain that all the Beautiful People made, Godwin's every desire was his for the asking. Seduced by luxury, Godwin never doubted his fortune, never wondered about his mysterious patrons.

'Then the game turned ugly.

'Suddenly, the ante was raised and the game was real. The stakes were his future, his sanity, and, possibly, his very soul. All Godwin Harpinshield had to discover was: What were the rules of the game? And who---or what---were the other players?'

THE DIAMOND CONTESSA
By Kenneth Bulmer
DAW, $2.50, August, 1983.
New sf novel.

'Harry Blakey remembered a childhood secret---that there was a room under his folks' home which crossed into another world. When, finally as a war veteran, he came back to the old house, he investigated---and found his memory was true.

'There were indeed other Earths and other civilizations and adventures to be had---at great risks.

'For when he enlisted in the special commando corps organized to stop the interdimensional warfare, he came up against the yerrifying hordes of the Diamond Contessa. She had looted many Earths and her hunger was always increasing. No mere human heroics would wrest the keys of the worlds away from her---not while her army of monsters held a dozen civilizations in thrall.'

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LEST DARKNESS FALL
By L. Sprague de Camp
DEL REY, $2.50, August 1983; First printing August, 1974.
Time travel SF novel.

'One minute archeologist Martin Padway is casually ambling through modern Rome. In an instant he is inexplicably hurtled back through time to 6th Centiry Italy---just before the Dark Ages. With one foot firmly rooted in the 20th Century, an the other planted tentativley in the Gothic Era, Padway---now Martinus Paduei, Quastor---uses his wits and his knowledge to change the course of history.'

THE TREE OF SWORDS AND JEWELS
By C.J. Cherryh
DAW, $2.95, August, 1983.
New fantasy novel.

'They said that Ciaran Cuilean was fey---that he had the touch of the Sidhe on him, and on his lands. And it was true, Elvish blood ran in his veins, and he had been to that other world---that parallel and magical land of Eald, where Arafel, the Lady of Trees, held dominion.

'But what should have been a blessing was a much a curse---for jealousy and fear grew in the lands of men. Shadows of newly awakened evil swarmed across both landscapes threatening to bring the clang and reek of war from the warm hearthstones of the mortal keeps to the silvery heart of Ealdwood. And Ciaran knew that he must once again put his humanity aside and reclaim his haunted weapons from the Tree of Swords or see both his worlds fold into darkness!'

THE CELESTIAL STEAM LOCOMOTIVE
By Michael Coney
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN, $13.95, Sept. 1983.
New SF novel. Volume One of The Song of Earth.

'In a future so distant that man has evolved into five distinct species on an Earth that is but one of many possible Earths, Michael Coney takes up myth, magic, alien worlds, wondrous beings, dreams, and high technology... This volume begins an extensive future history of Earth and man's home galaxy as told by Alan-Blue-Cloud, a pure intelligence, ineffable and immortal, who remembers not only what was but what will be.

'In the year 143,624 Cyclic, Earth is a planet that possesses only its past. Aeons earlier, the True Humans--those left on the planet after the Great Migration---withdrew into the Domes where, in sleep and with the aid of the Rainbow, they could dream time away on Dream Earth---a place where wishes, big and small, nearly always come true. Near one of these Domes is a primitive village where a young man, Manuel, lives in a hut by the sea and pursues his calling as an artist. Life in the village has been stagnant for centuries, and only the nearby Dome recalls to its inhabitants the past glories of the scientific age. But within the Dome are an old man and a sleeping girl who, in partnership with M anuel and under the direction of Starquin the Omniscient, will soon come together as the Triad, a team that will challenge the age-old forces that hold Earth in thrall, and change the history of the galaxy.'

YESTERDAY'S SON By A. C. Crispin
TIMESCAPE, $2.95, August, 1983.
New Star Trek novel.

'The Romulans attack the planet Gateway, where Federation scientists are studying the Guardian of Forever ---the mysterious portal to the past. The Enterprise must protect the Guardian---or destroy it. But Spock has already used the portal to journey to the past. On the planet Sarpedion, 5,000 years ago, Spock knew a beautiful, primitive woman. Now he has gone to meet his son!'

Very effective cover by Boris.

LITTLE, BIG By John Crowley
Bantam, $3.95, October, 1983; trade paperback edition Sept. 1981.
Fantasy novel.

'LITTLE, BIG is a wonder-filled tale of a young man in love who comes to a house on the edge of a wood to be wed - a house on the border between fantasy and reality where the lives of mortals and faeries intertwine. Here he enters a remarkable family whose tale reaches backward and forward a hundred years, from the waning days of the last century, to the end of our own.'

Cunningly well-written, detailed, literary, low-tensioned, a book of intriguing bits and pieces.

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THE SILVER SKULL By Les Daniels
Ace, $2.50, October, 1093; first published by Scribner's, 1979.
Fantasy novel.

'Into the realm of sixteenth-century Mexico comes Alfonso Martinez, a Spanish alchemist searching for the legendary Aztec gold. With him is the silver skull of Don Sebastian de Villanueva---wizard, vampire, explorer of earth's dark mysteries.

'Then the skull falls into the hands of a virgin priestess, the sensuous leader of an Aztec cult. And in awssesome scenes of occult ritual and bloody human sacrifice, Don Sebastian is brought back to life. So begins an unholy alliance as vampire an d priestess join forces, summoning all the dread powers of evil at their command...'

Interesting front-cover blurb: 'The Return of Don Sebastian, the vampire horrified by man!'

EMPIRE STAR By Samuel R. Delany
BANTAN, $2.50, September 1983; Ace edition in 1966.

This sf novel, written early in Delany's career, probably half its should-have-been length because of Ace's Ace-Double restrictions, suffers from a last-chapter revelation of plotlines and events that are condensed into a kind of postscript.

Even so, this is a strange, enchanting adventure, the story of Comet Jo, an ignorant boy from Rhys satellite in a far corner of a galaxy-wide empire, who is given a message to take to Empire Star and who meets many strange people and intelligences along the way, developes from a simplex to a multiplex mind, and is crucial in the cataclysmic events which follow.

The novel opens up and curls back into itself in a complicated time/space travel mode that isn't fully developed (and perhaps was never intended to be developed). It's intriguing and worth reading, however, for the messages embedded to youthful readers by Delany, which are also worthwhile to simplex adults.

THE UNTELEPORTED MAN
By Philip K. Dick
BERKLEY, $2.75, July, 1983; Shorter version published by Ace,'66.
SF novel; 30,000 words added which had been cut in first edition.

'In seconds, the Telpor effect could teleport you from overcrowded Earth, 18 light years to the wide open spaces of Newcolonizedland. 40 million emigrants had found it the final solution to Earth's problems of pollution and overcrowding.

'Maybe they were right. Rachmael ben Applebaum wasn't sure. Because there was a problem with the gateway to paradise.

'No one had ever returned.'

UBIK By Philip K. Dick
DAW, $2.50, Sept. 1983; first printed 1969.

'WHAT plucked Joe Chip from the year 1992 and sent him spinning crazily back through time to the 1930s?

'HOW could Joe's former boss scrawl ominous messages on washroom mirrors---after he had been killed in a Lunar bomb blast?

'WHY was Joes wayward mistress, with her awesome power of time control, trapped with Joe in a living nightmare she should have been able to end?

'UBIK was the answer--and it meant the difference between life and death...'

In my opinion this is Phil's finest, most surprising, startling layers-of-reality novel. A classic.

AFTER MAN:
A ZOOLOGY OF THE FUTURE
By Dougal Dixon
Intro. by Desmond Morris
St. Martin's Press, NY, Oct. '83
Illustrated, 9 X 11" paperbk, $9.95
Also available in hardcover.

This 9 X 11" paperback is very attractive. There are an abundance of full-color illustrations throughout the 124 pages. The author is a student of geology and paleontology.

'Extrapolating from currently existing species, Dixon looks to evolution in the distant future -- 50 million years hence -- when humankind and other dominant species of today are extinct. Stunning in execution and implication, this will be a decided treat for futurist, biology student or enthusiast, science fiction fan, and general reader.'

FROM THE HEART OF DARKNESS
By David Drake
First paperbk publication, SF novel
Nov. '83, $2.95, Tor Books

'From the HEART OF DARKNESS come no gentle wraiths, no pastel fantasies of bittersweet, seductive evil. This horror slams like a muzzle blast into its victim's awareness, carves its image with razor claws of violence as vivid and graphic as uncensored imagination. This horror comes from the center of the human soul, FROM THE HEART OF DARKNESS.'

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DANGEROUS VISIONS
Edited by Harlan Ellison
Berkley, $9.50, September 1983, trade paperback edition; first published by Doubleday, 1967.

33-story original anthology, with individual story Introductions by Harlan Ellison and author Afterwords.

A monumental science fictional event, startling, moving stories, and a book every sf reader has to read sometime in his or her life.

This is identical to the hardcover edition, including the illustrations by Leo and Diane Dillon. The paper isn't as good, but wotthehell.

THE BEST OF TREK #6
Edited by Walter Erwin and G.B. Love.
SIGNET $2.25, September, 1983.

New collection of Trek writings by Star Trek fans.

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GODS OF RIVERWORLD
By Philip Jose Farmer
PUTNAM, $14.95, October 1983.

New SF novel.

'More than twenty years ago, Philip Jose Farmer began the epic chronicle of the planet called Riverworld, and of the thirty-five billion men and women who owke there one morning to begin the first day of life after death. Resurrected by the power of an alien race, for reasons they can only guess at, unlikely fellow travelers like Mark Twain, Hermann Goring, and Cyrano de Bergerac wander the banks of a ten-million-mile-long river in search of their makers and the answers to this mystery. Now some of their questions have been an swered, and even more raised, by their discovery of the giant tower that rises from Riverworld's north polar sea. Here is the great computer that controls the resurrection process---and their mastery of that mechanism will make them like gods in Riverworld, with power of life and death over those billions of human lives. But they are not alone in the tower. Strange footsteps in the corridors, attempts on their lives, one "accident" after another, all lead them to the inevitable conclusion: either there is an assassin left behind in the tower---or one of their band is a traitor!'

Other books in the Riverworld series are:

TO YOUR SCATTERED BODIES GO
THE FABULOUS RIVERBOAT
THE DARK DESIGN
THE MAGIC LABYRINTH
RIVERWORLD AND OTHER STORIES.

A BARNSTORMER IN OZ
By Philip Jose' Farmer
Berkley, Oct. '83, $2.95, SF novel

'Hank had a feeling he wasn't in Kansas anymore. Hank Stover was one of the two people in the world who knew that Oz really existed...but he never expected to go there. He never expected his plane would be forced down by a green cloud that April day in 1923. Nor that he would meet the witch who had befriended his mother, Dorothy. Nor that she would be so beautiful.'

THE MAKING OF THE DARK CRYSTAL
CREATING A UNIQUE FILM
Text By Christopher Finch
HOLT, RINEHART AND WINSTON, $10.95, August, 1983.

Large, 8½ x 12 heavy gloss softcover, 96 page book, with multitudes of color and b/w photos, sketches, details. An extraordinary, beautiful revelation of the skills and talents and preparations that went into the film.

The work of Brian Froud continues to astonish me.

ICE PROPHET By William R. Forstchen
Del Rey, $2.95, August, 1983.

'For millennia after the Accident, Earth lay cold and still, its small population punished by the dismal climate, harried by plague, and impoverished by frequent bloody wars.

'Then, unexpectedly, the oppressed had reason to hope, for a leader stalked the frozen seas with great ice fleets and new ideas... In terrible battles he vanquished the forces of tyranny and brought the promise of renewal to an otherwise miserable world.

'But nothing was quite as it seemed---either to Michael Ormson or to his followers...'

New novel.

THE MAN WHO USED THE UNIVERSE
By Alan Dean Foster
WARNER, $2.95, August, 1983.

New SF novel.

Initially intriguing, soon predictable "adult" sf novel about a super man with a Plan for the galaxy. Kees vaan Loo-Macklin is too smart for any opponent as he takes over and guides mankind and aliens alike.

See longer review in "The Archives" of SFR #48.

MIDWORLD By Alan Dean Foster
DEL REY, $2.50, Aug. 1983; first printing Feb. 1976.

SF novel.

'Born was a child of the rainforest that covered Midworld...part of a primitive society that the peaceful tree planet had sustained for hundreds of years. He was wise in the ways of his world and he knew well the precarious natural balance that governed all things.

'Then one day the aliens came. Giants!

'They knew nothing of the upper or lower Hell...and cared less. Born had risked his life to save them, to guide them through the myriad tangled boughs past unseen, unsuspected dangers lurking in the underbrush.

'As the days passed, Born realized his mistake. And as he had

once hunted only to live...he knew now that he would be forced to live only to kill!'

WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE...
By Alan Dean Foster
DEL REY, $2.75, October 1983; first published December 1977.
12-story collection.
Classic cover by Michael Whelan.

g

A MATTER FOR MEN By David Gerrold
THE WAR AGAINST THE CHTORR,Book 1.
Timescape, $6.95, Sept. 1983.
New SF novel. Trade paperback.
'The population of Earth has been devastated by a series of inexplicable plagues. The survivors struggle to maintain the remnants of civilization as deadly new life forms invade the environment, including the fierce Chtorrans. One thousand pounds of man-eating intelligence, these creatures from another world must be destroyed, or mankind will not survive.
'Jim McCarthy, peacetime soldier and scientist, overwhelmed by loneliness and loss, must put aside his childhood as he confronts monstrous aliens and selfish humanity before he can join in saving mankind from the greatest, most organized threat it has ever faced: the total biological invasion of the planet!'

h

NEBULA AWARD STORIES #17
Edited by Joe Haldeman
HOLT, RINEHART AND WINSTON, $16.95, August, 1983.
New SF anthology.
These award winning stories, articles, poems...are from or about 1981. Appendixes list the award winners from 1965 to the present volume.

SEVEN CITADELS #3: THE DEAD KINGDOM
By Geraldine Harris
Greenwillow Books, $9.50, Aug. 1983.
New hardcover fantasy novel for ages 12 and up.
'Kerish lo-Taan, third son of the Emperor of Galkis, continues his search for the Savior of the doomed kingdom, begun in volumes 1 and 2 (PRINCE OF THE GODBORN and THE CHILDREN OF THE WIND) of SEVEN CITADELS. Only if he is freed can that kingdom be saved. Kerish has found three of the seven legendary sorcerers who hold the keys that will eventually unlock the Savior's prison.
'In THE DEAD KINGDOM, Kerish and his three companions must brave the perils of the burning hot Red Wastw in order to reach Tir Tonar, citadel of Saroc, guarded by murderous beasts and filled with nightmares. They must sail the black waters of the Dead Kingdom, and persuade its long-since-dead but immortal sorcerer to accept his death...'

STONEHENGE: WHERE ATLANTIS DIED
By Harry Harrison and Leon Stover
TOR, $3.50, September, 1983; portions were published in 1972 as STONEHENGE.
Historical fantasy novel.
'Anson: Prince of an ancient house, intent on restoring the keystone of his father's power, braves the limits of the land-rimmed sea to sail North, through the cold fog, to the icy island where, with heroic effort, the key to victory over Atlantis may be found.
'Inteb: Ex-envoy from the Pharough, reluctant voyager to the forbidding island of Yerni, armed only with his arcane knowledge and his loyalty to Ason.
'Naikeri: Proud daughter of the Albi, she has never known a warrior like Ason, nor a world like the one she helps him to create---a world that will focus on the great monument of Stonehenge.'

WORDCHANGER By Mary Haynes
Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, $10.00, September, 1983.
New SF novel for readers ages 10 and up. Hardcover.
'Runaways William and his mother, inadvertently harboring the dreaded machine that provoked their flight, link fortunes with runaway Lilly Maxwell in a cross-country journey.'

FRIDAY By Robert A. Heinlein
Del Rey, $3.95, August, 1983.
First published in hardback by Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1982.
When Friday is described by The New York Times Book Review as "...a superbeing. Engineered from the finest genes, and trained to be a secret courier in a future world of chaotic ferocity and intrigue, she can think better, fight better and make love better than any of the normal people around her."
how can you resist? Especially when the first paragraph reads:
As I left the Kenya Beanstalk capsule he was right on my heels. He followed me through the door leading to Customs, Health and Immigration. As the door contracted behind him I killed him.
Now, that's a hook!

TO CONTROL THE STARS
By Robert Hoskins
DelRey, $1.95, Sept. 1983; first printing June, 1977.
Stargates linked 3000 worlds, but now no man knew how to operate them.

TO ESCAPE THE STARS By Robert Hoskins
DEL REY, $2.50, October 1983; first published December 1978.
SF novel.
'It began when freesailer, plunderer Jamas Oregas and his beautiful business partner set out to bilk the unsuspecting denizens of the backwater planet Llango.
'It got complicated when Jamas, who knew the ins and outs of stargates, was doublecrossed and had to disappear---and fast.
'It moved into high gear when Jamas landed on Prime--a repository planet of galactic history--and learned of a mysterious lost race that held the master key to all the stargates for all the worlds.
'And it finally exploed when Jamas himself decided to scour the galaxy, looking for that long-lost race, following a trail that would lead him to power beyond his wildest dreams---if he somehow managed to stay alive!'

i

SINGLE COMBAT by Dean Ing
First paperbk publication, Nov '83
Tor, SF novel, $2.95
'Fight for life in streamlined America! 1995: Scores of cities are vaporized. Everywhere chaos reigns...only one major social unit was prepared for Armageddon: the Mormons. In Utah civil defense is a religious imperative: now every practicing Mormon is crowded into a warren of bunkers underneath Salt Lake City with a year's supply of food, medicine -- and weapons. Small wonder then if when America begins to dig itself out it looks to a Mormon president for leadership. Small wonder too if the Mormon hierarchy yields to the siren call of religious dictatorship...'

j

SOUL EATER By K.W. Jeter
Tor, $3.50, October, 1983
New occult-horror novel.
'Dee's a good little girl---until the night, when, driven by the ravening new hunger within her, she gets the carving knife and creeps into her father's bedroom.
'The killing hunger's come to stay, although Dee doesn't know it yet.'

ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S BORROWERS OF THE NIGHT Edited by Cathleen Jordan
DIAL PRESS, $12.95, September 1983.
New anthology.
27 stories of mystery and suspense chosen from ALFRED HITCHCOCK'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE, from the 60's and early 70's.

CONAN THE TRIUMPHANT By Robert Jordan
Tor, $6.95, October, 1983.
New Conan novel; trade paperback.
'Leading his Free-Company of mercenaries, the mighty Cimmerian is embroiled in many-sided anarchy following the death of Ophir's king, and enters the service of the voluptuous Lady Synelle, unaware that she is secretly high priestess of the vile demon-god Al'Kirr, intent upon the bestial sacrifice of lovely maidens and perfect warriors...'

k

SEARCH FOR THE SUN By Colin Kapp
DAW, $2.25, Sept. 1983, first published by New English Library, 1982.
SF novel. First Cageworld novel.
'"World upon world had been added, each planetary orbit studded with new planets. Planet had been linked to planet until unimaginably vast concentric shells, spinning, stabilized, surrounded the sun. Each shell teemed with the countless billions of humanity. And always unceasingly the work went on..."
'Out on Mars shell the question had arisen---was there really a central sun or was it just a myth out of the remotest time. To hunt for the sun meant to go through the intervening shells---an expedition that had never been attempted. But there were three who were ready to go: a master assassin, a master illusionist, and a mistress of the erotic arts.
'To find the sun, to outwit Zeus the planet-sized computer that directed the continual expansion of the Solar shells, this would be the greatest adventure of half a million years.'
A great idea for a series.

BOOK OF SHADOWS By James Killus
Ace, $2.50, September, 1983.
New Fantasy novel.
'Willan, the wizard, seeks vengeance for his father's death. Nara, the gypsy, seeks the future in her painted cards. Britar, the thief, seeks adventure and profit.
'An unlikely trio, they are all that stand in the way of the Demon Quecora and his quest for the long-lost Chaos Harp. If Quecora finds the Harp and can replace its missing string, he will be a demon no longer---he will be a god. And the world's long winter will begin...'

DIFFERENT SEASONS By Stephen King
Signet, $3.95, August, 1983. First published in hardcover by Viking Press.
Four long stories of horror. A bestseller.

COURTSHIP RIGHT By Donald Kingsbury
Timescape, $3.95, September, 1983.
New sf novel.
'On the planet Geta, the only food is man. And one powerful family, the maran-Kaiel, must make an ambitious marriage with a beautiful, heretical priestess.
'Courted, the priestess can only prove her worth in the Ritual of Death. Courting, the three brothers and two wives of Kaiel fight to survive in a harsh civilization. The long-silent Sky God has begun to speak. The priestess and her suitors are swept into the violently unfolding destiny of a dark and ancient past!'

Z-LENSMAN By David A. Kyle
BANTAM, $2.75, August, 1983.
New SF novel based on E.E. "Doc" Smith's Lensman series.
'The strangest of all Second Stage Lensmen is Nadreck, the multi-dimensional extreterrestrial guardian of Palain VII. When the spawn of Boskonia threaten an interplanetary Armageddon, only Nadreck's Z-powers can save the Lensmen and civilization from the deadly mind attack from another plane of existence.'

l

MENACE UNDER MARSWOOD
By Sterling E. Lanier
DEL REY, $2.95, October 1983.
New SF novel.
'For centuries the human outcasts of Mars lived wild, independent ives in the Martian outback called the Ruck.
'But then the mysterious men of the "New Clan" came to preach total rebellion against the Mother Planet ---and that Earth's U.N. Command could not allow.
'So it sent a team of its best officers to learn the secrets of the "New Clan." Unfortunately, to do the job right, the Terrans would have to cooperate with their worst enemies---the Ruckers!'

STARLORD By Louise Lawrence
Timescape, $2.50, Sept. 1983; second printing from Jan. 1980.
SF novel.
'His starship fell on the mountain, and the secrets of the universe burst forth.
'Erlich looked like other boys. But he was more perfect, more brilliant than most. After his crash on the Mawrrhyn, the mountain of magic and pitiless strength, the alien boy was rescued by Rhys and his family. Awed by his angelic youth, whose visions harbored the power of the universe, Rhys vowed to shelter him from harm. But earthly armies pursued him, avid for his secrets, on a final, desperate escape through the menacing heart of the Mawrrhyn!'

ANACKIRE By Tanith Lee
DAW, $2.95, October, 1983.
New SF novel; a companion novel to THE STORM LORD
'The lowland girl seemed to contain fire. Her hair stirred, flickered, gushed upward, blowing flame in a wind that did not blow.
'A tower of light shot up the sky, beginning where the girl stood. For a second there was only light, then it took form. The form it took was Anackire.
'She towered, she soared. Her flesh was a white mountain. Her snake's tail a river of fire in spate. Her golden head touched the apex of the sky, and there the serpents of her hair snapped like lightnings. Her eyes were twin suns. The eight arms, outheld as the two arms of the girl had been, rested weightlessly on the air, the long fingers subtly moving...
'The girl standing before the well, unblasted by the entity she had released, seemed only quiescent. At last one could see that her face, as it had always been, was the face of Anackire....'

THE WANDERER By Fritz Leiber
Tor, $2.95, October, 1983; first published in 1964.
SF novel.
'For five billion human beings, reaction to the arrival of The Wanderer is pure and simple; stark terror as the alien planet's presence causes ever more terrible catastrophes. But for one man it is different: for him the story of The Wanderer is one of bizarre alien domination, merging into unrequited love for she who owns him.'

MAGUS REX By Jack Lovejoy
TOR, $2.95, September, 1983.
New science-fantasy novel.
'In the year 1,000,000 AD or thereabouts a young wizard has dared to fall in love with Zenobia, only daughter of Magus Rex.' Rather than destroy the youth, Magus decides to take Zenobia away on a vacation: Ming China, Imperial Rome, Atomic America. Valorious, the youth, may follow if he dares. For though any

sorcerer can travel backward through time, returning is another matter...

Beautiful, but too small cover painting by Stephen Hickman.

m

THE GOLDEN TORC By Julian May
Del Rey, $2.95, Sept. 1983; first published in 1982.

Volume II of The Saga of the Pliocene Exile.

SF novel.

'By AD 2110 nearly 100,000 humans had fled the civilized strictures of the Galactic Milieu for the freedom they thought existed at the end of the one-way time tunnel to Earth, six million BC.

'But all of them had fallen into the hands of the Tanu, a humanoid race who'd fled their own galaxy to avoid punishment for their barbarous ways.

'And now the humans had made the Tanu stronger than the Firvulag, their degenerate brethren and ritual antagonists. Soon the Tanu would reign supreme. Or so they thought...

GOLDEN DREAM By Ardath Mayhar
Ace, $2.95, September, 1983; trade paperback published in 1982.

A Fuzzy Odyssey

'In their hidden valley high in the mountains of the planet Zarathustra lived the golden creatures who called themselves the "Gashta," but were known to men as "Fuzzies." Here is the story of their ancient culture, and of how they encountered the invaders who called themselves "human beings."'

Novel, based on H. Beam Piper's LITTLE FUZZY.

DANCER'S ILLUSION By Ann Maxwell
Signet, $2.50, August, 1983.

New SF novel. The first two novels in this series were FIRE DANCER and DANCER'S LUCK.

'The ship's computer has chosen ---and now Rheba the fire dancer and her Bre'n mentor Kirtn must fulfill the next part of their ongoing mission---to return a shipload of fellow ex-slaves to their widely-scattered home planets. Their current destination---Yhelle, a world where reality is far too fleeting for anyone but a master illusionist to grasp.

'Yhelle is considered the most civilized place in the galaxy and their brief stopover should be pure pleasure. But it doesn't take Rheba, Kirtn, and their two Yhelle crewmates long to discover that beneath the paradiselike surface of this society lurks an evil that is growing more powerful each day, a seductive darkness that feeds on love and kills with ecstacy.'

STEAL THE SUN By A.E. Maxwell
TOR, $3.50, September, 1983; hardcover edition in 1981 by Richard Marek.

Historical fiction

'Los Alamos 1945: The first nuclear weapon is about to be tested--and the second is about to be stolen!

'Finn is the O.S.S captain charged with safeguarding all the processed uranium there is in the entire world---just enough to make two bombs. The bombs that will be dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

'The man known as Kestrel, samurai and spy, means to steal it for Japan. And so does the Englishwoman Vanessa Lyon, for her Russian masters. If she succeeds, Russia will invade China and Japan. War with the United States will ne inevitable.'

MORETA: DRAGONLADY OF PERN
By Anne McCaffrey
DEL REY, $14.95, November 1983.

New SF novel.

'...back in time to an earlier Pern to tell the story of Moreta, one of Pern's great and true heroines.'

Uncorrected proof copy.

SUPERLUMINAL By Vonda N. McIntyre
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN, $14.95, Oct. 1983.

New SF novel, which developed from the novella, AZTECS.

'The love story of Laenea Trevelyan and Radu Dracul is framed by Laenea's dramatic first flight as a starship pilot, and by other dimensions of time and space, of land and sea.

'Earth has far colonies and star flights and new races of human beings adapted to space travel or to the depths of the sea.'

THE HELIX AND THE SWORD
By John C. McLoughlin
Doubleday, $13.95, September 1983.

New SF novel.

'It is the year 5740, after the filtration into the Deep of Space. Earth, the ancient wellspring of life, has for so long been abandoned that the superstition concerning her bars man's return as effectively as did the clouds of radioactivity that long ago ended the earthly human dominion. It is a time when colossal empires flourish in the void of interplanetary space, when mastery of synthetic life has, like the gift of fire, transformed the hostile, dark vacuum into a benign shelter for wondrous civilizations. The art of machine building is long forgotten, for not only animal and plant life but even tools, weapons, and nations are all alive and all too well armed as they speed through space---toward war.'

DEATH OF THE RAVEN
By Dee Morrison Meaney
Ace, $2.75, November, 1983.

New Fantasy novel. A sequel to AN UNKINDNESS OF RAVENS. These are set in the 11th Century.

'The beautiful Lady Branwen was the last of her race, with magical healing talents and the power to create illusions and change men's minds. Branwen alone knew the ancient language, she alone could summon all the wild creatures of the Earth.

'But after a raging bloody battle all the men, and the king himself, blamed and resented her. They feared Branwen's gifts. Only her beloved, the Viking Lord Thorkell, remained true---his mighty love never wavered.

'Though war might tear them apart, nothing could touch Thorkell's love. Through acts of treachery and savagery, Branwen survived. Until the fateful day of the ultimate call. The call that must be answered, that would change her life forever.'

PRIVILEGE By Joan Mellen
SIGNET, $3.50, September 1983; first published, hardcover, 1982 by Dial Press.

Biography.

'Sasha Bruce was the daughter of distinguished U.S. ambassador David K.E. Bruce. Brought up in the embassies of Paris, Bonn and London, she had everything to live for: wealth, beauty and the limitless opportunity her social status gave her. At Radcliffe, she was among the "best and the brightest," yet she turned her talent for art history to smuggling and forgery and used her money and looks to attract unscrupulous men, swindlers and scoundrels. And, before her thirtieth birthday, at the Bruce's family estate in Charlotte County, Virginia, she was found lying in a pool of her own blood, dying from a bullet wound to the head.

'The story behind Sasha Bruce's death is an extraordinary and utterly gripping tale of money and power, bizarre intrigue, and misguided passion...'

THE SILENT GONDOLIERS
A Fable By S. Morgenstern
DEL REY, $12.95, November, 1983.
Category: A Fanciful Novel.
Illustrated by Paul Giovanopoulos.

A very engaging, delightful tall tale about the old-time singing gondoliers of Venice, who were the greatest singers of the world, eclipsing even Caruso, and primarily a tale about Luigi, the world's best gondolier---and absolutely the world's worst singer!

And about the great Killer Storm, and about why all the singing gondoliers suddenly began to sing like... Well, to say more would be a sin.

THE JOINING OF THE STONE
By Shirley Rousseau Murphy
Avon/Flare, $2.25, October 1983; first published 1981 by Atheneum in hardback. Fantasy.

The fifth book about the children of Ynell.

'Ramad of the Wolves, killed at the hand of the firemaster of Dracvadrig, has been dead twelve long years. Now Lobon, Ramad's noble heir, returns to the abyss to avenge his father's death.

'But the fate of the Planet Ere has hung in the balance since the shattering of the great runestone of Eresu. Evil sorcerers seek to harness its might by luring headstrong young Lobon and the beautiful Seer Meatha into their web of treachery, greed and desire.'

n

THE JARGOON PARD By Andre Norton
DEL REY, $2.50, October 1983; first published 1974.

The cover and bacover loudly proclaim this science fiction, but it is out and out fantasy.

'In Arvon the ancient powers answer those who know how to call, and the blood of the werereriders flows in the veins of those who are both man and cat.

'Kethan was heir to the great house of Car Do Prawn because his mother's evil Wise Woman had tampered with another's birthright. But one day Kethan was given a belt of incredible beauty and great power. From that moment, his future was again in other hands---and his body in a strange new form...'

o

BUG SCANNER AND THE COMPUTER MYSTERY
By Walter Oleksy. Illustrated by Anthony Accardo.
WALKER, $8.95, August, 1983.
New Juvenile (ages 8-12).

'When a highly sensitive, experimental prototype for a breakthrough in microchips is stolen from his mother's computer lab in the Scanner house, Bug sets out with his friend Millie and his dog, Print, to find the thief. Their adventure takes them to a warehouse, a cemetary, an abandoned house and, eventually, the airport.'

p

SPIRALS By William Patrick
Houghton Mifflin, $13.95, Aug. 1983.
Medical horror novel.

'In a tightly sealed laboratory north of Harvard Yard, scientists are creating a form of microscopic life unknown to nature.

'In a Cambridge apartment a few blocks away, Harvard biologist Peter McKusick is putting his three-year-old daughter to bed, failing to notice the first subtle traces of a metamorphosis neither science nor nature could have foreseen.

'SPIRALS' intricate plot, propelled by kidnapping and murder, pits McKusick against avengeful and obstructing grandfather in a race to save the little girl. She is the only link Mac has to the beautiful young woman who, because of him, died years before on a winding jungle road.

'McKusick's obsession, born of love, leads him from Harvard to the tropical laboratory of Jack Stasson, a British outcast who has gone beyond the frontiers of conventional science. Ultimately, though, McKusick must depend on Liz Altmann, a woman who was his teacher and his lover and who has betrayed him twice before, to solve the riddle and keep his daughter alive.'

LADY OF DARKNESS By Diana L. Paxson
Timescape, $2.95, September, 1983.
New fantasy novel; The Second Book of Westeria. LADY OF LIGHT was the first.

'At last a queen was found to honor the covenant. A Queen to be Mistress of the Jewels of Westria, and wield their magical thrall over the elements. A Queen to conquer the mysteries of the Kingdom, as she had conquered the King's heart.

'But the young and gentle Queen little suspected treachery in the magical spheres of the Westrian court, where jealousy festered and a sorcerer bridled at her powers.

'Now her beloved King lay gravely ill, and the hands of sorcery sought to seize the sacred Jewels themselves. Now the Queen alone must battle the Kingdom's darkest threat since the Cataclysm, as whirlwinds of destruction descend upon fair Westria.'

THE MAKING OF RETURN OF THE JEDI
Edited by John Phillip Peecher
Del Rey, $3.50, September, 1983.
Nonfiction. Probably all you'd ever want to know about how, where, when, who and with what the movie was made. 32 pages of b/w photos.

You can learn an enormous amount about how movies are made, but at the risk of forever losing your "innocent movie-goer" viewpoint---your knowledge will put you behind the scenes too often.

ALANNA: THE FIRST ADVENTURE
By Tamora Pierce (first novel)
Atheneum, Sept. '83, $12.95

Alanna loved riding and archery. Her twin brother wanted to be a sorcer. Both of them had The Gift. When their father sent them away to be trained, they switched places so that Alanna, posing as Alan, a boy, is to be trained as a knight and Thom, her brother, went to the convent to be trained as a sorcerer. A juvenile adventure.

MIDAS WORLD By Frederik Pohl
St. Martin's, $12.95, August, 1983
New sf novel.

'When Amalfi Amadeus perfected the fusion reactor, he became a living legend. And the world, taking the limitless energy Amadeus had given it, blossomed. With power to spare, technology found a million new applications; robots manned the busy factories, and everyone on arth had more than he or she could possibly use. It was a dream come true...almost.

'Every pipeline has two ends, and soon the avalanche of products by the robot industries threatens to bury mankind in luxury. The "poor" become frantic consumers as they try to eat, drink and wear the endless supply of goods. Only the wealthy are permitted the luxury of working, of keeping old possessions. Eventually robots -hemselves are programmed to be consumers and drain off the flood of things: Robot muggers chase robot victims, while drunken robot cripples beg for change.

'But the new, precarious balance of supply and demand is endangered by berserk consumers like Sonny Trumie, who satisfies his infantile whims by commissioning gingerbread palaces and fleets of battleships. Others, like Michael Pellica-Perkins, live in colossal orbiting "habitats" and amuse themselves with "hunts" for low-intelligence mineral robots. Its natural resources nearly depleted, the earth becomes a scorching, yellow wasteland, until, at last, a lone scientist plots to cut off the power and save the planet.'

This is a series of previously-published short stories which, in sequence, make a multiple viewpoint novel of sorts.

NEBULA AWARD STORES #16
Edited By Jerry Pournelle
Bantam, $2.95, Sept. 1983; hardback published in Aug. 1982.

'Each year the Science Fiction Writers of America select a handful of stories to receive the coveted Nebula Award.' Plus an Introduction by Pournelle and four non-fiction pieces, and listings of previous years' awards.

The year of #16 is 1981.

THE ANUBIS GATES By Tim Powers
ACE, $2.95, December 1983; uncorrected proof copy.

New SF novel.

The mixture includes:
'1802--Egypt's last sorcerers, desperate to free their ancient empire from colonial rule, invoke a ghastly magic that punctures holes in the fabric of time.
'1810--A hideous madman gathers an army of beggars in the ruined cellars and sewers of London.
'1983--Led by an eccentric billionaire inventer, a group of literary voyeurs enter a temporal time gap to attend a Sunday lecture given by Samuel Taylor Colleridge---which leads to confrontations beyond the realm of nightmare.

'To this add: a sort of werewolf that exchanges its body for that of its vixtims, an artificially-created Lord Byron doppelganger, a 17th century archival note in pig latin, the slaughter of 479 Mameluke beys, a depilatory parlor...'

Christ, I've got to read this!

THE COLOUR OF MAGIC
By Terry Pratchett
St. Martin's, $10.95, October 1983.

Satirical new SF novel.

This world is 'supported on the back of a giant turtle---of unknown and disputed sex---and by four huge elephants upon whose shoulders it rests.

'If you get too close to the edge of this disc-world you fall off!

'THE COLOUR OF MAGIC is the story of the trials and tribulations of two very unlikely adventurers: Rinceworld, the inept, drop-out wizard whose spells work only some of the time and the blissfully naive interplanetary tourist---an actuary from the Agatean Empire---called Twoflower. With Rinceworld as the chaperon, and with Twoflower's luggage, supported and propelled by hundreds of little legs, scurrying close behind, they encounter a wonderful array of characters: pricesses, dragons, heroic barbarians, and thieves on this decidedly off-center world.

'A Main Selection of the Science Fiction Book Club.'

Mockery of all we hold dear and sacred had better be damned good! Alas, from a quick dip and a chortle, this is. More later.

THE MIRROR OF HELEN
By Richard Purtill
DAW, $2.50, October 1983.

New Fantasy novel.

'The story of Helen of Troy is one of the great classics of all time, yet there still remains much that could be told. In this unusual fantasy novel Richard Purtill dares to look behind the scenes to depict in living color what it was really like to be involved with that half-goddess whose radiant beauty did indeed launch a thousand ships.

'Here is Helen as a child, kidnapped and held hostage. Here is Helen as a woman, captive in an alien city, while the civilized world sought for her, fought for her.'

r

THE SWORD OF WINTER By Marta Randall
Timescape h/c, $14.95, Sept. 1983.

New SF novel.

'Cherek is a land physically and spiritually caught between the barbaric magic of the North and the technological advances of Vantua, the capital of Cherek, to the south.

'It is mid-winter in the Cherek province of Jentesi, and heated intrigues surround the impending death of the tyrannical Lord Gambin. All is in chaos at the Palace as the Lord's unworthy heirs battle over who will inherit his vast power: Culdyn, the Lord's son, a cruel, petty man; Syne, an icily mysterious cousin who has her own secrets to hide; Maranta, the Lord's daughter and dabbler in the arts of magic; and Lord Coren, a rival jealous of the Gambinia' wealth, who has no scruples to hinder his rise to power.

'At the center of this controversy stands Lyeth, sworn rider to the Lord Gambin, whose sacred duty is to ride the news of the successor to the capital of Vantua. Unwillingly, Lyeth finds herself enmeshed in this deadly drama, defending both her life and the future of Jentesi against those who would drag the province back into its feudal, barbaric past.'

DRAGONWORLD
By Byron Preiss and Michael Reaves
Illustrated by Joseph Zucker
BANTAM, $3.95, August 1983, Trade editions September, November 1979.

Fantasy novel.

'Somewhere beyond the northern mists lies a land where dreams live and dragons are real. This is a tale of the twilight of the dragons, of two nations plunged into war by a tragic misunderstanding, of a shy dreamer's incredible of peace to a long-forgotten land where nightmares are born.'

THE BEST ROOTIN' TOOTIN' SHOOTIN' GUNSLINGER IN THE WHOLE DAMNED GALAXY By Mike Resnick
SIGNET, $2.50, October 1983.

New SF novel, #4 in the Tales of the Galactic Midway series.

'The top act of Thaddeus Flint's interstellar carnival, Billybuck Dancer was the one, the only, the greatest gunslinger in the known universe. But somehow, fame and fortune weren't enough for the Dancer. Shooting cards from between the teeth of lovely ladies and outdrawing the "unbeatable" killing machine were just too easy for a man like Billybuck. And even Thaddeus had to agree that the sharpshooter's new idea was good showmanship---suicidal maybe, but good, moneymaking showmanship. So Billybuck's challenge was broadcast throughout the starways: One million credits to the being that could outshoot the Dancer!'

TELEMPATH By Spider Robinson
Tor, $2.95, October, 1983; first 6 chapters were published in ANALOG as "By Any Other Name."

New SF novel.

'For those infected with Carson's Syndrome virtually every artifact of technological society carries an odor that is utterly maddening. When the strange artificial plague arrived, all over the world people exploded from their cities and towns, killing anything and anyone that impeded their mad stampede for air untainted by technology.

'When it was over not one in a hundred had survived. And that was only the beginning...'

THE WAR FOR ETERNITY
By Christopher Rowley
Del Rey, SF Novel
Nov. '83, $2.95

'The bearlike aliens of Fenrille had long been allies of the fiercely independent human clans. Together Men and Fein ruled the wooded highlands of the odd planet's single continent. And together they grew rich, for only the people of the highlands could harvest the drug that kept men forever young. Then the masters of a distant Earth sent a starfleet with a force of brutal Space Marines to seize the planet. But they weren't prepared for the colonist's stiff resistance -- and no one had warned them of the aliens' very special defenses.'

THE ADVENTURES OF ALYX
By Joanna Russ
TIMESCAPE, $2.50, August, 1983
New five-story sf anthology.

'Alyx, assassin and thief---meet her in palaces and back alleys, on the frozen wastes of a distant planet.'

DEAD WHITE By Alan Ryan
Tor, Nov. 1983, $3.50
Horror Novel

'In the tiny Catskills town of Deacons Kill, the blizzard strikes without warning. The people of Deacons Kill have seen terrible storms before and they settle down uneasily to wait it out. But this one is different. As the drifts creep higher, a train appears out of the storm, arriving on rusty abandoned tracks -- an antique circus train bringing clowns -- and shadows ... and death.'

S

THE SECOND BOOK OF SWORDS
By Fred Saberhagen
Tor, Fantasy novel, Nov. '83
$6.95

'For a game the gods have given the world twelve Swords of Power, so that they might be amused as the nations go to war for possession of them. But Vulcan Swordmaker has had his little joke: the Swords can kill the gods themselves. What started out as a Divine Jest has become all too serious. Now the gods want their swords back -- but even gods must tread most carefully when faced with the Swords of Power.'

A CENTURY OF PROGRESS
By Fred Saberhagen
TOR, $2.95, September, 1983.
New SF novel.

'A man who sits grieving is approached by a beautiful stranger with message: "Your Sandy will live. Be here two weeks from today." What can she be, he thinks, but a sick-minded con artist? But when he returns to the hospital he discovers that his granddaughter is suddenly, miraculously cured of her deadly cancer. Two weeks later Norlund is a draftee in a war he never suspected could exist, a secret war in which two possible futures battle for existence in our present.

'One of them is descended from Nazi Germany.

'Norlund starts out as a draftee too smart to believe in Good Guys and Bad Guys. After he sees a concentration camp that has been in operation for a millennium, he'll be a volunteer.'

THE YEAR'S BEST FANTASY STORIES #9
Edited by Arthur W. Saha
DAW, $2.50, October 1983.
New Fantasy anthology.
Stories by Parke Godwin, Tanith Lee, Jor Jennings, Michael Shea, John Kessel, Suzette Haden Elgin, Richard Christian Mattheson, R.A. Lafferty, Jane Yolen, and Harlan Ellison.
The year "collected" is 1982.

DRAMOCLES By Robert Sheckley
Holt, Rinehart and Winston, $15.95, August, 1983.
New sf novel of the absurd.

'Dramocles has always been a rather ordinary king on a rather ordinary planet, but he finds his life utterly changed one day when he is informed he has a destiny to fulfill---one that is revealed not all at once, but in tantalyzing bits and pieces. As he fumbles and struggles to carry out his mission, Dramocles's world falls apart around him---he inadvertently starts an interplanetary war, his family disintegrates, his closest friends and advisors betray him, and his realm is besieged by a series of barbarian invasions.'

What follows proves that Sheckley is a wild and crazy writer and amazingly entertaining.

THORNS By Robert Silverberg
Bantam, $2.75, August, 1983; first published in 1967.

'Three misfits enmeshed in a web of emotion: Minner Burris, an aging starman transformed by alien surgeons into something not quite human; Leona Kelvin, virgin mother of a hundred babies she would never see; and Duncan Chalk, a psychic vampire who kindled their love for one another to satisfy a billion voyeurs...and shattered it to feast on their pain.'

Very good novel of character and perversity. Absorbing.

NIGHTWINGS By Robert Silverberg
AVON, $2.50, September 1983; first Avon printing, September 1969.
SF novel.

'Alien invaders have conquered Earth, sending her peoples to the brink of despair. The old Watcher, who spent his life scanning the heavens for galactic enemies, now finds his mission finished and his friends torn from him.

'He especially misses young Avluela, the beautiful Flier who soared through the night on luminescent wings and breathed beauty into his heart. Though chaos reigns, the Watcher makes a voyage of discovery, but he is not prepared for the stunning passions and betrayals he encounters. He refuses to give up, however, and determins to reach the Holy City of Jorslem.

'There the Watcher hopes to find his destiny in youth and knowledge. But much more awaits him in Jorslem, for Avluela is there, and she holds not only the promise of love, but the secret of human destiny.'

WHERE THE EVIL DWELLS
By Clifford D. Simak
Del Rey, $2.75, September, 1983; hardcover published in Sept. 1982.
Fantasy novel.

'Secretly and in stealth, four puny humans set out to invade the heartland of Evil---the so-called Empty Lands, filled with every evil creature from the darkest of mankind's myths.

'Harcourt went reluctantly to rescue his long-lost and almost forgotten fiance. The Knurly Man, who was somewhat other than quite hyman, went to find the death that would be kinder than the future he foresaw.The abbot sought to recapture a fabulous prism in which the soul of a saint had been trapped. And the girl Yolanda was seeking the answer to a mystery and a question she did not know.

'But already their coming and their purpose was known. The denizens of the Empty Lands were girding for war.

'And behind all the Evil lay the most ancient of dark Powers, waiting patiently for the humans whose souls should set it free.

ENCHANTED PILGRIMAGE
By Clifford D. Simak
Del Rey, $2.50, Sept. 1983; first published in 1975.
Fantasy novel.

'The Wastelands were a realm of magic where no man ventured. Along the borders, the Little People pursued their ancient ways. But the interior was populated by all the dread creatures of darkest legends.

'There the Hellhounds took their wful vengeance on any who dared violate their territory. And there the Chaos Beast was dead but struggled still to give birth to something even more strange and incomprehencible.

'Mark Cornwall was forced to flee into the Wastelands to escape from Beckett, evil agent of the inquisition. There he was joined by Oliver the rafter goblin, Gil of the marshes, Hal and Coon of the Hollow Tree, Snively the gnome---and Mary, who could free the horn of a unicorn and said she was born in the Wastelands.

'Ahead lay unknown terror and perilous adventure. And if they survived, there was the alien Caretaker with a message of Destiny.'

LANDO CALRISSIAN AND THE FLAMEWIND OF OSEON By L. Neil Smith
DEL REY, $2.50, October 1983.
New SF novel.

'A solar system with little more than luxury hotels catering to the unemployed filthy-rich, the Oseon was every gambler's dream come true. And so it was for Lando Calrissian, gambler, rogue, and con-artiste. Until he broke the gambler's cardinal rule: never beat a cop at high-stakes games of chance.

'Soon Lando and his feckless five-armed robot companion were being stalked by two enemies---one they knew but could not see, and one they saw but did not recognize... until it was too late.'

THE IMPERATOR PLOT By Steven Spruill
Doubleday, $11.95, August, 1983.
New sf novel.

'Unknown forces in the twenty-first century initiate a series of assassination attempts on the Imperator of the Terran Empire, Gregory Amerdath. In one attempt, his body is totally destroyed---but his head and brain are kept working by the advanced technology of the Terran scientists. That he continues to live and rule is a tribute to his physicians' skill---and to their loyalty. For although Amerdath has brought Earth to its highest level of power and civilization, there are many who might gain by his death: a coalition of rebellious colonists led by their urbane viceroy, Richard DuMorgan; the inscrutible alien Manoster, emissary of the Moitians; the Empress Eunice, who is jealous of the Imperitor's many mistresses; the Princess Briana, a cold and scheming woman whose passion is to rule her father's empire.

'Though he trusts his chiefs of security and intelligence, Amerdath wants Elias Kane to direct the investigation into the attempts on Amerdath's life. The hunt becomes something more than a duty when Kane;s fiancee dies, and its conclusion is something more complex and disturbing than he, or anyone, had imagined.'

A previous Elias Kane sf adventure novel was THE PSYCHOPATH PLAGUE.

ESCAPE VELOCITY
By Christopher Stasheff
Ace, $2.95, October, 1983.

The very beginning of the story of Gramayre and THE WARLOCK IN SPITE OF HIMSELF.

New SF novel.

'Democracy is crumbling in the Interstellar Dominion Electorates and the LORDS are preparing a coup. If Dar and Samantha can't get their message to Terra in time, nothing will prevent the forces of totalitarianism from taking control. And every police ship in space has just been alerted that they are dangerous telepaths to be shot on sight!'

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS By Jonathan Swift
Illustrated by David Small
WILLIAM MORROW & CO., $10.50, 1983.

The Small pen illustrations are very fine, fully in the spirit of the stories and the times in which they were written.

Alas, Swift seems to have been edited and sanitized and simplified to the supposed taste and reading capacity of children for this 96-page, large-print, mostly-drawings hardcover of 8 x 10 size. There is but one bit of satire in the Lilliput adventure, and none at all in the Brobdingnag section. This is maybe okay for an 8-year-old, but anyone older may wonder why this is supposed to be a classic of imagination and satire.

Nowhere in this volume is any notice given that the text is incomplete.

THE THRONE OF MADNESS
By Somtow Sucharitkul
TIMESCAPE, $2.95, October 1983.

New SF novel. Volume II of The Inquestor Trilogy.

'The Inquest has ruled throughout the millennia with awesome power. Man has lost his hopes, his soul, his dreams of utopia. Only an Inquestor can free mankind form this false god.

Kelver, hand-picked as a child for this awesome mission, has survived an intergalactic struggle with other Inquestral prodigies to conquer the almighty Inquest. Now he must find and grasp the Throne of Madness, to wage mystic warfare---and change the Universe forever!'

LIGHT ON THE SOUND was Volume I of The Inquestor Trilogy.

t

NECROMANCER NINE By Sheri S. Tepper
Ace, $2.50, September, 1983.

New Fantasy novel; sequel to KING'S BLOOD FOUR.

'He wears the guise ot a Necromancer: the black cloak, the broad-rimmed hat, the gauze mask painted with a death's head. But raising the dead is the least of his Talents. He is a wild card that threatens the True Game itself.

'Demon, Doyen, Dragon, and Tragamor, Sorcerer, Seer, Armiger, and King--- Take your places. Let the Game begin...'

AN XT CALLED STANLEY By Robert Trebor
DAW, $2.50, October 1983.

New SF novel.

'In orbit at the New Hope satellite, men finally made contact with a civilization in the stars. It came in the form of a complex signal which enabled the building of a super-computer to embody it. Top secret, they called the entity Stanley and allowed it ot project a humanoid image to speak for it.

'But that XT--that Extra-Terrestrial intelligence--played a cagy game with its interpreters. Possessed of a data bank containing the whole knowledge of an alien super-science, it refused to divulge anything until its own questions about humanity were answered.

'The battle of wits at New Hope ---Stanley versus humanity, scientists vs. politicians, and possibly planet vs. planet---became a growing crisis that could either open up the stars or else put an end to Earth's fondest dreams.'

v

BORIS VALLEJO 1984 FANTASY CALENDAR
WORKMAN, $5.95.

Erotic, nude, startling, magnificent lewd women involved with ugly, horrid monsters, aliens, and fantasy humans, that's what this calendar is all about above the dates.

Boris really knows anatomy! In fact, his technique is detailed and his conceptions convincing. Once you get past the lovely flesh the creatures are the things you'll examine and admire more. After all, a nude is only a nude, but a BEM* is a joy forever.

*Bug-Eyed Monster.

DARKCHILD By Sydney J. Van Scyoc
Berkley, $2.75, September, 1983;
Berkley trade paperback edition Sept. 1982.

SF novel.

'For these hundred centureis, women of wisdom and strength have mastered the sunstones to bring warmth and wealth to their people.

'But while the Brakrathi tended their stonehalls and valleys, others have traversed the spaces between the stars with less gentle motives. Like the arrogant Arnimi, who study and measure everything but understand nothing of the human soul. Or the Benderzic, who ruthlessly harvest information from their army of child informants and auction it to the highest bidder.

'Until the coming of Darkchild.'

THE WIZARD OF LINN By A.E. Van Vogt
TIMESCAPE, $2.50, August, 1983; first publishe 1950 by ASTOUNDING, then 1962 by Ace.

SF novel. Sequel to EMPIRE OF THE ATOM.

'When an alien Riss ship invades Earth's solar system, the empire of Linn is threatened with violent extinction. The Royal Mutant Clane must battle the Riss with only one weapon---a deadly sphere of light. The sphere can cut through time and space, and the aliens covet its power.

'Now Clane must journey sixty-five light years to a distant planet to learn the ultimate secrets of his only weapon. Hunted by enemies in space, threatened by treacheries on Earth, Clane confronts the Riss in a final, total war for Earth's survival!'

MUTINY ON THE ENTERPRISE
By Robert E. Vardeman
TIMESCAPE, $2.95, October 1983.

New Star Trek novel.

'The ship is crippled in orbit around a dangerous, living, breathing planet, and a desperate peace mission to the Orion Arm is stalled. Kirk has never needed his crew more. But a lithe, alien woman is casting a spell of pacifism---and now mutiny ---over the crew.'

WORLD OF MAZES By Robert E. Vardeman
Ace, $2.75, September, 1983.

New fantasy novel; third in the Cenotaph Road series. #1 was CENOTAPH ROAD, #2 was THE SORCERER'S SKULL.

'Lan Martak and his giant (but timid) arachnid companion Krek are not the only beings traveling the road between the worlds. The wizard Claybore wants to use it to find all pieces of his disassembled body, so his evil can reign forever.

'Meanwhile, the road leads to the lair of the master of illusion, Luister len-Larrotti, who has captured the beautiful Inyx by becoming the image of all she loves. Only Lan can save her and stop Claybore. His own magic is growing...but will it grow fast enough?'

This is fast-paced, graphic, high-tension pulpish fiction. That's a compliment.

W

WELCOME, CHAOS By Kate Wilhelm
Houghton Mifflin, $13.95, Sept. 1983.

New SF novel.

'What would happen to the precarious balance of terror if scientists could extend life for centuries? If one power bloc had biological protection against radiation and the other did not? Whose thumb would press the button first? These are questions that seize the reader by the throat in Kate Wilhelm's latest novel.

'When Lyle Taney took leave from her teaching job to live high in the mountains researching the ways of eagles, she was just planning to write her next book. When the obscure government agent from an anonymous department tried to force her to spy on her mysterious neighbors, she resisted. But the first step had been taken, involving her in a life-and-death struggle.

'Lasater was an unscrupulous, skilled operative who thought he could maneuver her as he pleased. He believed women were incapable of making ethical or moral decisions---and he was wrong.'

WELCOME, CHAOS By Kate Wilhelm
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'What would happen to the precarious balance of terror if scientists could extend life for centuries? If one power bloc had biological protection against radiation and the other did not? Whose thumb would press the button first? These are questions which confront the reader in this novel.'

AN AMBUSH OF SHADOWS
By Paul O. Williams
Del Rey, $2.95, Sept. 1983.

Book Five of THE PELBAR CYCLE.

'For years after their disastrous defeat by the Pelbar at Northwall, the slave-holding Tantal had kept their distance.

'But once the Pelbar moved northward to colonize the shores of the Bitter Sea, Tantal forces were always on the attack.

'Then one day they kidnapped the young daughter of Stel Westrum, Pwlbar master craftsman, re-inventor of the steamboat---and, suddenly, the single-minded foe of all things Tantal...'

THE PELBAR CYCLE:
Book One: THE BREAKING OF NORTHWALL
Book Two: THE ENDS OF THE CIRCLE
Book Three: THE DOME IN THE FOREST
Boof Four: THE FALL OF THE SHELL

MANSEED By Jack Williamson
DEL REY, $2.75, October 1983; hardcover first edition October 1982.

SF novel

'Egan Drake was a wealthy but unhappy visionary who died early and left behind only a powerful dream. He proposed to spread Mankind among the stars.

'Then there was Megan Drake. She took her brother's vision and made it real. At the Raven Foundation's New Mexico headquarters, she gathered around her experts in astronautics, biology, computer science, defense and fusion propulsion.

'The project was simple in deighn yet grandiose in its aim: a thousand tiny ships would crawl to the stars; each that landed on an Earth-type planet would produce several dozen colonists; each colonist would be a product of the genes derived from Megan and her experts. Every ship would manufacture cyborgs for repairs and self-protection.

'But much of the technology was new and untried; no one could predict what might really occur at a millennia-long journey's end if, say, a cyborg fell in love or aliens were met or...'

THE ISLAND OF DOCTOR DEATH AND OTHER STORIES AND OTHER STORIES
By Gene Wolfe
TIMESCAPE, $3.95, October 1983. 2nd printing from June, 1980.

14-story collection.

Recommended.

Z

WE
By Yevgeny Zamyatin
Avon, $3.95, August, 1983.

Russian sf novel.

'In a regimented future world created entirely of glass, under the perpetually watchful, all-seeing eye of The Benefactor, nameless "numbers"---survivors of a devastating war---live out lives devoid of all emotion. But suddenly D-503, a mathematician who even "dreams in numbers," is tempted by passion to betray his world of Reason.'

THE OMEGA POINT TRILOGY
By George Zebrowski
Ace, $2.75,November, 1983.

New SF novel in three parts.

'Stranded in the remotest galactic wastelands, he was a relic of the most evolved civilization humans ever dreams possible---and which they had destroyed.

'Now he didn't figure into their plans anymore. But they figured into his. He was a man with a mission: out to avenge the past, with only his wits and a fighting ship that couldn't be equaled...'

course. Even if 30% unemployment is a reality in a few years, 70% of the workers will be employed, and a framework of society and commerce will prevail. A lot of you will actually prosper in the coming bad times. Saved money will be worth more and more and more in purchasing power.

You can see the force of deflation at work in the union-busting going on, in the "give-backs" extorted from workers, in the drastic cuts in pay in the airline industry.

Watch it happen.

THE POLITICAL FALL-OUT from these massive economic shifts will be equally large: I expect a sooner-than-expected downleg into deeper depression to put President Reagan into severe trouble if he decides to run again. His performance in the Near-East and in Central America are very important since he must keep us out of a "quagmire" to have a chance.

He will be helped tremendously by John Anderson's third party run again, and by Jesse Jackson's run for the presidency if it is made. That would split off enough Demo and independent votes to slide Reagan in again, barely.

Too, in spite of all the criticisms, harping, heel-biting, cheap-shots, Reagan is in tune with a basic conservative shift in sentiment in this country, and is looking more and more like Eisenhower every month.

REMINDER---THE SUBSCRIPTION RATES ARE GOING UP NEXT ISSUE.

Beginning with #50 (January 25, 1984), subscription rates will be $9.00 for one year (four issues) and $18.00 for two years (8 issues).

Foreign subscriptions will be: US$9.50 for one year; US$19.00 for two years.

I urge you all to renew or extend your subscriptions now at the current low, low rates. Retail: $2.50

The contents for future issues looks good, with four or five excellent interviews in the works and the acquisition last week of a new Greg Benford article, "Hard SF in the Real World." It will likely appear in #51.

You won't want to miss the New, Improved, Extra-Strength SFR of 1984 and 1985.

A DISASTER.... I just realized, too, too late to rectify matters, that I forgot to include one book and five magazines in THE ARCHIVES.

A short, incomplete notice will have to do, I'm afraid. Received:

STAYING ALIVE--A Writer's Guide
By Norman Spinrad
Donning, $5.95, Sept. 1983.

AMAZING November, 1983. $1.50

AMAZING January, 1984. $1.75

FANTASY BOOK December, 1983. $3.00

RIGEL Summer, 1983. $2.50

INTERZONE Autumn, 1983. $2.50

MERRY CHRISTMAS
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #48 "The Treasure of the Secret Cordwainer" By J.J. Pierce; "Raising Hackles" by Elton T. Elliott; "Once Over Lightly" by Gene DeWeese; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; letters from Platt, Foster, Busby, Bloch, Ellison...

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #47 Interviews with Janet Morris and Charles Platt; "Philip K. Dick--A Cowardly Memoir" by Peter Nicholls; "Of Ground, and Ocean, and Sky" by Ian Watson; "Once Over Lightly" by Gene DeWeese; "Alien Thoughts" by REG.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #46 Interview with John Sladek; "How NOT To Write Science Fiction" by Richard Wilson; profile of Larry Niven; "Standing By Jericho" by Steve Gallagher; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "Raising Hackles" by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #45 Interview with Keith Laumer; "Pulp!" by Algis Budrys; Interview with Terry Carr; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "Raising Hackles" by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #44 Interview with Anne McCaffrey; "How Things Work" by Norman Spinrad; "Fantasy and the Believing Reader" by Orson Scott Card; "Raising Hackles" by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #43 Interview with James White; "The Porno Novel Biz" by Anonymous; "How To Be A Science Fiction Critic" by Orson Scott Card; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "Once Over Lightly" by Gene DeWeese; SF News by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #35 Interviews with Fred Saberhagen and Don Wollheim; "The Way It Is" by Barry Malzberg; "Noise Level" by John Brunner; "Coming Apart at the Themes" by Bob Shaw.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #36 Interview with Roger Zelazny; A Profile of Philip K. Dick by Charles Platt; "Outside the Whale" by Christopher Priest; "Science Fiction and Political Economy" by Mack Reynolds; Interview with Robert A. Heinlein; "You Got No Friends in This World" by Orson Scott Card.

●

$1.50 per copy from #37 onward

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #37 Interview with Robert Anton Wilson; "We're Coming Through the Window!" by Barry N. Malzberg; "Inside the Whale" by Jack Williamson, Jerry Pournelle, and Jack Chalker; "Unities in Digression" by Orson Scott Card.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #38 Interview with Jack Williamson; "The Engines of the Night" by Barry N. Malzberg; "A String of Days" by Gregory Benford; "The Alien Invasion" by Larry Niven; "Noise Level" by John Brunner; SF News by Elton Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #39 Interview with Gene Wolfe; "The Engines of the Night"-Part Two by Barry N. Malzberg; "The Nuke Standard" by Ian Watson; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; SF News by Elton Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #40 Interview with Robert Sheckley; 4-way conversation: Arthur C. Clarke, Harlan Ellison, Fritz Leiber & Mark Wells; "The Engines of the Night"-Part Three by Barry N. Malzberg; Darrell Schweitzer; SF News by Elton T. Elliott

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #41 Space Shuttle Report by Clifford R. McMurray; "Chuck's Latest Bucket" by David Gerrold; Interview with Michael Whelan; "The Bloodshot Eye" by Gene DeWeese; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; SF News by Elton T. Elliott.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #42 Interview with Ian Watson; "One Writer and the Next War" by John Brunner; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "The Human Hotline" by Elton T. Elliott.

BACK ISSUES

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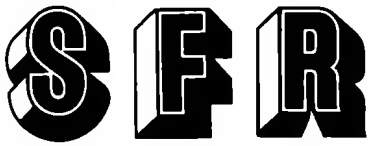
THE ALIEN CRITIC #5 Interview with Fritz Leiber; "The Literary Dreamers" by James Blish; "Irvin Binkin Meets H.P. Lovecraft" by Jack Chalker.

THE ALIEN CRITIC #6 Interview with R.A. Lafferty; "The Trenchant Bludgeon" by Ted White; "Translations From the Editorial" by Marion Z. Bradley.



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THE ALIEN CRITIC #9 "Reading Heinlein Subjectively" by Alexei and Cory Panshin; "Written to a Pulp!" by Sam Merwin, Jr.; "Noise Level" by John Brunner; "The Shaver Papers" by Richard S. Shaver.

THE ALIEN CRITIC #10 Interview with Stanislaw Lem; "A Nest of Strange and Wonderful Birds" by Sam Merwin, Jr.; Robert Bloch's Guest of Honor speech; The Heinlein Reaction.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #14 Interview with Philip Jose Farmer; "Thoughts on Logan's Run" by William F. Nolan; "The Gimlet Eye" by John Gustafson.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #15 Interview with L. Sprague de Camp; "Spec-Fic and the Perry Rhodan Ghetto" by Donald C. Thompson; "Uffish Thots" by Ted White.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #16 Interview with Jerry Pournelle; "The True and Terrible History of Science Fiction" by Barry Malzberg; "Noise Level" by John Brunner; "The Literary Masochist" by Richard Lupoff.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #17 Interview with George R.R. Martin; Interview with Robert Anton Wilson; "Philip K. Dick: A parallax View" by Terrence M. Green; "Microcosmos" by R. Faraday Nelson.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #18 Interview with Lester del Rey; Interview with Alan Burt Akers; "Noise Level" by John Brunner; "A Short One for the Boys in the Back Room" by Barry Malzberg.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #19 Interview with Philip K. Dick; Interview with Frank Kelly Freas; "The Notebooks of Mack Sikes" by Larry Niven; "Angel Fear" by Freff; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #20 Interviews: Theodore Sturgeon, and Joe Haldeman;"Noise Level" by John Brunner; "The Vivisector" by Darrell Schweitzer; "The Gimlet Eye" by John Gustafson.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #21 Interview with Leigh Brackett & Edmond Hamilton; Interview with Tim Kirk; "The Dream Quarter" by Barry Malzberg; "Noise Level" by John Brunner.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #22 Interview with John Varley;"S-F and S-E-X" by Sam Merwin, Jr.; "Afterthoughts on Logan's Run" by William F. Nolan; "An Evolution of Consciousness" by Marion Zimmer Bradley.

SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #23 Interviews: A.E. van Vogt, and Jack Vance, and Piers Anthony; "The Silverberg That Was" by Robert Silverberg.

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SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW #33 Interview with [illegible]; "A Writer [illegible] ditors" by George R. [illegible] Noise Level" by John Brun[illegible]

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